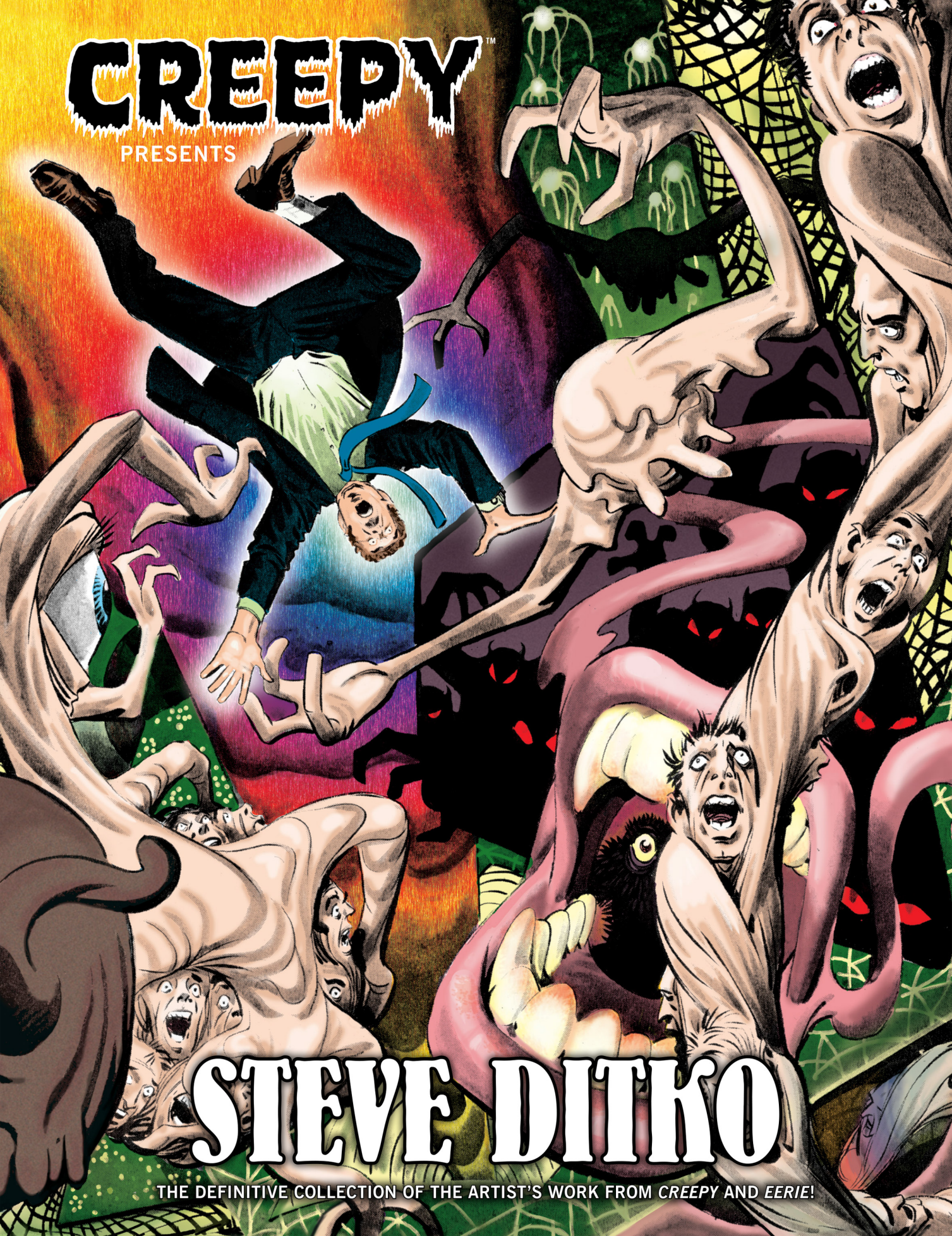

CREEPY™
PRESENTS
STEVE DITKO
THE DEFINITIVE COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST'S WORK FROM *CREEPY* AND *EERIE*!

CREEPY™

PRESENTS

STEVE DITKO

CREEPY™

PRESENTS

STEVE DITKO

The definitive collection of Steve Ditko's stories from *Creepy* and *Eerie*

Collaborators

TERRY BISSON

CLARK DIMOND

ARCHIE GOODWIN

Foreword by **MARK EVANIER**

Cover colors and digital production by **RYAN JORGENSEN**

DARK HORSE BOOKS

Publisher
MIKE RICHARDSON

Editor
PHILIP R. SIMON

Consulting Editor
DAN BRAUN

Assistant Editor
EVERETT PATTERSON

Collection Designer
JUSTIN COUCH

Published by
Dark Horse Books
A division of Dark Horse Comics, Inc.
10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

DarkHorse.com

To find a comic shop in your area, call the Comic Shop Locator Service:
(888) 266-4226

First edition: August 2013
Digital ISBN 978-1-62115-700-7

CREEPY™ PRESENTS STEVE DITKO
CREEPY, the CREEPY logo, and all contents © 1966, 1967, 2013 by New Comic Company. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from Dark Horse Comics, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this publication and those of any preexisting person or institution is intended, and any similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. Dark Horse Books® and the Dark Horse logo are registered trademarks of Dark Horse Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.

This volume collects the stories of Steve Ditko from *Creepy* issues 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, and *Eerie* issues 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, originally published in 1966 and 1967 by Warren Publishing.

MIKE RICHARDSON President and Publisher • **NEIL HANKERSON** Executive Vice President • **TOM WEDDLE** Chief Financial Officer • **RANDY STRADLEY** Vice President of Publishing • **MICHAEL MARTENS** Vice President of Book Trade Sales • **ANITA NELSON** Vice President of Business Affairs • **SCOTT ALLIE** Editor in Chief • **MATT PARKINSON** Vice President of Marketing • **DAVID SCROGGY** Vice President of Product Development • **DALE LAFOUNTAIN** Vice President of Information Technology • **DARLENE VOGEL** Senior Director of Print, Design, and Production • **KEN LIZZI** General Counsel • **DAVEY ESTRADA** Editorial Director • **CHRIS WARNER** Senior Books Editor • **DIANA SCHUTZ** Executive Editor • **CARY GRAZZINI** Director of Print and Development • **LIA RIBACCHI** Art Director • **CARA NIECE** Director of Scheduling • **TIM WIESCH** Director of International Licensing • **MARK BERNARDI** Director of Digital Publishing

New Comic Company: **DAN BRAUN**, **JOSH BRAUN**, **RICK BROOKWELL**, and **CRAIG HAFFNER**

CONTENTS

ALL ART BY STEVE DITKO

ALL STORIES BY ARCHIE GOODWIN,
UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

LETTERING BY BEN ODA, WITH BILL YOSHIDA

FOREWORD by **MARK EVANIER** **6**

THE SPIRIT OF THE THING! **13**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #9

COLLECTOR'S EDITION! **21**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #10

BEAST MAN! **29**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #11

BLOOD OF THE WEREWOLF! **37**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #12

SECOND CHANCE! **45**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #13

WHERE SORCERY LIVES! **51**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #14

THANE: CITY OF DOOM! **59**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #15

THE SANDS THAT CHANGE! **67**
Story by **CLARK DIMOND** & **TERRY BISSON**
Originally appeared in *Creepy* #16

ROOM WITH A VIEW! **77**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #3

SHRIEKING MAN! **83**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #4

BLACK MAGIC **90**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #5

DEEP RUBY! **98**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #6

FLY! **104**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #7

DEMON SWORD! **110**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #8

ISLE OF THE BEAST! **118**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #9

WARRIOR OF DEATH! **124**
Originally appeared in *Eerie* #10

FOREWORD

Just before Thanksgiving of 1965—some accounts say February of '66—Steve Ditko turned in his last *Spider-Man* story for Marvel Comics. Anyone interested enough in Ditko to purchase this book knows the grandeur of that work and the major jolt in comic book history that occurred when it ended.

His resignation was not wholly unexpected. He and editor-scripter Stan Lee had not been getting along for quite a while, disagreeing as they did about the direction of the series, the underlying philosophy of it and its world, and the division of their labor. Both concurred with the motto that functioned as subtext in the comic: "With great power, there comes great responsibility." Well and good. But they couldn't quite come to terms on what that responsibility was or how it could or should inform the life of Peter "Spider-Man" Parker. Ditko also objected to receiving only an artist credit and pay when he was contributing, he felt, as much to the stories as Lee, if not more.

For a time, the quarrels had subsided, owing to a change in job descriptions. Ditko demanded and began receiving "Plotted by" credit and a small chunk of writing money. More important, he was empowered to plot and pencil the comic on his own. He'd hand in penciled pages and notes, not to Stan but to production manager Sol Brodsky. Lee would then write the dialogue, the pages would be lettered, and they'd be returned to Ditko for inking.

An odd way to work, it was—Lee and Ditko collaborating without speaking—but it worked . . . sort of. Some pretty good issues resulted, at least.

Still, there was friction. When Ditko received the scripted and lettered pages back to finish, he'd sometimes see Lee-written dialogue that sought to course correct his plot points . . . or put into characters' mouths thoughts and philosophies that ran contrary to his intentions or beliefs. There would sometimes be notes to restage or redraw panels to reflect the alterations Lee had made in the story.

Lee thought the stories were being improved and he was the editor. Ditko thought the stories were being damaged and he was quitting. There were also some issues in the air about what Ditko believed he'd been promised if and when Spider-Man was merchandised or adapted into other media. A deal had just been made to animate the character for a TV series, and Ditko was receiving nothing. It looked like that was all he ever would receive.

So when he handed in the finished art to *Amazing Spider-Man* #38, he informed Brodsky that it and the Dr. Strange story he'd delivered not long before were his last work for Marvel . . . and indeed he did not draw again for the company until 1979. When he did come back, he refused to return to either feature . . . or even to draw those characters for a cameo.

During the intervening years, he worked for almost every publisher that was buying work in his specialty genres. Much was done for Charlton Comics, a firm for which he'd worked intermittently since 1953. Charlton was notorious for paying the lowest rates in the industry, but they had another habit which made them appealing for Ditko: When he worked for them, they accepted everything he did, "as is," with no corrections. Ditko liked that. He liked it enough that even while handling that immense load of work for Stan Lee, he had occasionally managed to slip in a job or two for Charlton.

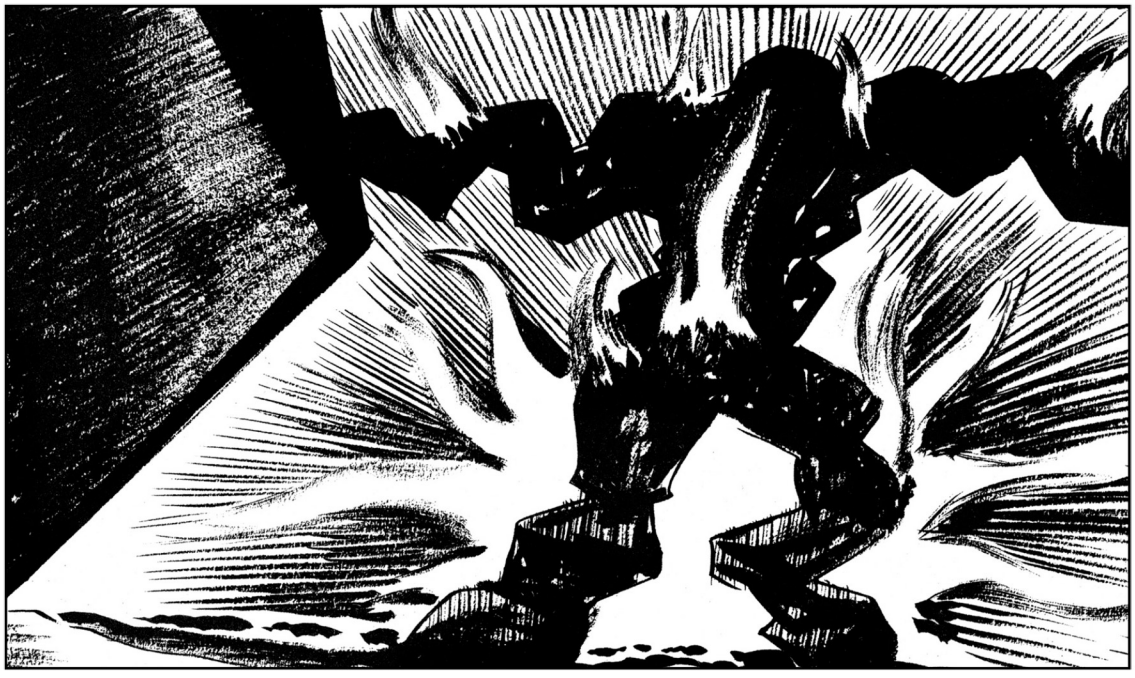
In the years right after exiting *Spider-Man*, he also drew a few stories for Tower Comics' *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* and its spinoff titles, and he began working with artist Sal Trapani. Trapani, also a Charlton veteran, liked to secure art jobs from publishers, then hire someone else to ghost pencil for him. He picked up assignments for Dell Comics on their TV adaptations (*Get Smart*, *Hogan's Heroes*) and on some original superhero titles (*Nukla*, among others) and engaged Ditko to do much of the pencil work. Trapani would then ink. He also contracted for ghost and mystery stories for ACG (publishers of *Adventures into the Unknown*) and for DC's *Strange Adventures*, all with Ditko penciling.

But Ditko's main post-Marvel work was for Warren Publishing, the home of *Creepy* and *Eerie*. For those two magazines, he drew the sixteen stories collected in this volume, all but one written by the editor, Archie Goodwin. Lettering was provided by Ben Oda or in some cases, Bill Yoshida.

At the time, Jim Warren's magazines featured a stunning array of top artists, many of whom had appeared in the legendary EC Comics. The rates were not high, but there was work available and it usually paid on time. A number of those who drew for the line welcomed the challenge. After years of drawing color comics and leaving it to some unknown colorist to finish the art, here was the chance to finish one's art by oneself. It was also a venue in which one could experiment and employ art supplies and techniques that weren't a part of drawing for color comics.

There were two other reasons why some of the industry's best could be found then in the pages of *Creepy* and *Eerie*. One was merely to be part of a very impressive roster of artists. The first issue of *Eerie* to feature Ditko's art also contained Jack Davis, Angelo Torres, Al Williamson, Joe Orlando, Jerry Grandenetti, Alex Toth, Johnny Craig, Gene Colan, Rocke Mastroserio, and Frank Frazetta. There was certainly no shame and maybe a note of pride in having your art appear in the same package as those fellows.

Then there was the other perk: Working with Archie Goodwin.



At a time when some editors in comics were notorious for treating their freelancers with disrespect and yelling, Goodwin had a sterling reputation. He always would. Archie was nice. He was honest. And he was also one of the best writers in the business. When he quit Warren the following year, all the good artists left as well, Ditko included. The already-low rates were slashed then, but as Alex Toth explained, "None of us were working there for the money because there wasn't much. We were working there to work with Archie."

In a 1990 conversation, Goodwin had only vague recollections of how Ditko had joined his stable: "He just showed up one day. I think Wally Wood had told him about us. I'd been trying to get Woody to do more work for us and he kept saying, 'I'll squeeze you in, I'll squeeze you in.' But he knew Ditko or Ditko knew him. He mentioned Ditko to me and I thought we'd never get him because he was doing so much for Marvel. But then he left Marvel and of course, I was delighted to have him." Ditko did a story for every issue Goodwin edited after that.

None of the problems with Stan Lee were present in the Warren work. Ditko was not required to contribute to plots, though Goodwin was open to suggestions of themes or subject matter. The scripts were not only complete but often included little thumbnail layouts Goodwin did which, he always emphasized, the artists were free to disregard . . . and probably should. "The thumbnails were for me," he explained. "They helped me to visualize the story I was writing. Since I had the drawings, I figured I might as well send them along to the artists just in case they were of any value."

In a 1970 conversation with this author, Ditko spoke of how much he welcomed the chance to work in black and white. Like most who worked for Warren, he varied his techniques from story to story. His fans probably favored the ones in which he applied gray tones with a wash of heavily diluted ink. Even with Warren's cheap printing, the results were striking. When you come across a piece of the original art, you're struck by how the work was even better than it appeared.

I have one page from "Beast Man," the page everyone remembers with the gloves. It's an accomplishment to render heroes and monsters in an interesting, memorable manner. To make a pair of rubber gloves stand out . . . well, that's just not

humanly possible. All throughout his Warren work, Ditko was able to give his characters a roundness and a sense of weight and form, even beyond what he managed in conventional four-color comics.

Goodwin remembered Ditko being very easy to work with—"A complete professional who delivered on time and never gave me any trouble." They would later collaborate on a few other stories for other publishers.

"I always tried to write the stories for individual artists," he explained. "Sometimes, I'd ask them if there was a certain setting or a certain kind of story they were interested in, and I also knew what they did best. For instance, Jerry Grandenetti drew old, creaky haunted houses better than anybody. Of course, once in a while, I'd get in a jam. I'd write a script for one artist and then he wouldn't be available and someone else would need something to draw so Angelo Torres, for instance, might get a story I wrote with Gray Morrow in mind. Fortunately, the artists were all very versatile."

Ditko got off to a good start with "Room with a View," his first published story for Warren and according to Goodwin's recollections, the first one Ditko did for him. The script was not intended for Ditko—Goodwin recalled having Toth in mind for it—but it was in good hands. Perhaps because Ditko was easing into the swing of a black-and-white magazine, he employed no wash, Zip-A-Tone, or any technique specific to monochrome work on this first job. Instead, he made up for the lack of color with extra rendering and detail. "Tickling the board" was his term for it.

For his second published story, "The Spirit of the Thing," he brings in gray tones, all or most of which appear to have been applied with markers.

Then in his third, "Shrieking Man," he seems to have started to apply washes with a brush, and the result is quite striking. The staging of this story suggests that Ditko was taking Goodwin's scripts, in

which everything was broken down panel by panel, and inserting additional panels, many of them wordless. There are places where Ditko apparently took the action and dialogue Goodwin intended for one panel and spread it across two or three panels.

That certainly happened with the fourth published story, "Collector's Edition," a particular favorite of readers and also, by no coincidence, of Archie Goodwin, who once said of it, "I'm not the kind of guy who can point to one story and say it was the best thing I ever did but that's one of the ones everyone mentions to me and I have Steve to thank for that."

For it, Ditko employed no wash or gray tones, instead reverting to "tickling the board." It all works well to capture the slimy feel of the tale and the characters therein. But what especially sets the mood are the eyes along the bottom of each page—a gimmick, Goodwin said, that appeared nowhere in the script he handed Ditko. "That was all Steve's creation," Archie reported. "Like a good editor though, I'm happy to take undeserved credit."
The odd texture of the "eyes" panels was achieved by laying down a white Zip-A-Tone pattern over

finished inked art. Zip-A-Tone—practically obsolete in the era of Adobe Photoshop—was a way of adding halftone dots or other patterns to artwork. You selected a self-adhesive Zip-A-Tone sheet in your chosen pattern, pasted it down over the art, and then trimmed it away (usually with an X-Acto knife) where you did not want that pattern to appear. Ditko cut little highlight areas into his white Zip-A-Tone to add to the effect.

After that, he reverted almost exclusively to the ink-wash approach—particularly effective on stories like "Black Magic," "Second Chance," and "Deep Ruby," which were obviously crafted by Goodwin to tap into Ditko's unique way of rendering magical realms. He got better and better at it, probably because once he saw the printed magazines, he could see how to adjust what he was doing for better effect.

Then came several stories which combined Ditko's flair for mystic settings and magic with his skill at rendering heroic action figures. Goodwin would later recall that Ditko had suggested sword-and-sorcery as a genre he wished to try and thought might fit in well with *Creepy* and *Eerie*. This was three years before Marvel would introduce sword-and-sorcery into the world of mainstream comics with its *Conan the Barbarian* comic. Given the excellence of his work in these stories, it's a shame Ditko never had the opportunity to draw *Conan*.

"Demon Sword" bridged the gap into that kind of story, and then they plunged fully into that world with "Where Sorcery Lives" and "City of Doom." "Where Sorcery Lives" featured a barbarian hero named Garth. Garth might well have been the protagonist for "City of Doom" but for reasons unknown, Goodwin opted to create a new barbarian warrior named Thane. Thane, drawn by others, would appear intermittently in later Warren magazines.

The last published story by Ditko for Warren, "The Sands That Change," was the only one he drew not written by Goodwin. Drawn on textured paper with crayon or pencil shading, the experiment does not strike this writer as completely successful . . . but of course, nothing Ditko drew in this period is without interest.

In the long, grand scheme of his career, the man's time at Warren might be dismissed as a quick stopover. But his work was among the most memorable to appear in those magazines, and there is a certain delight in seeing him stretching in different directions, both in terms of story content and artistic technique. Virtually everything Ditko did well he did in at least some of those tales, and it was a fine match of author and illustrator. What a joy to have all the material collected in this handsome volume.

—**MARK EVANIER**, February 2013

Mark Evanier has been reading comics all his life and writing comics (and about comics) most of his life. He is the author of *Kirby: King of Comics*, a biography of Kirby, King of Comics, and numerous TV shows. Plus, he does something on *Groo the Wanderer*.

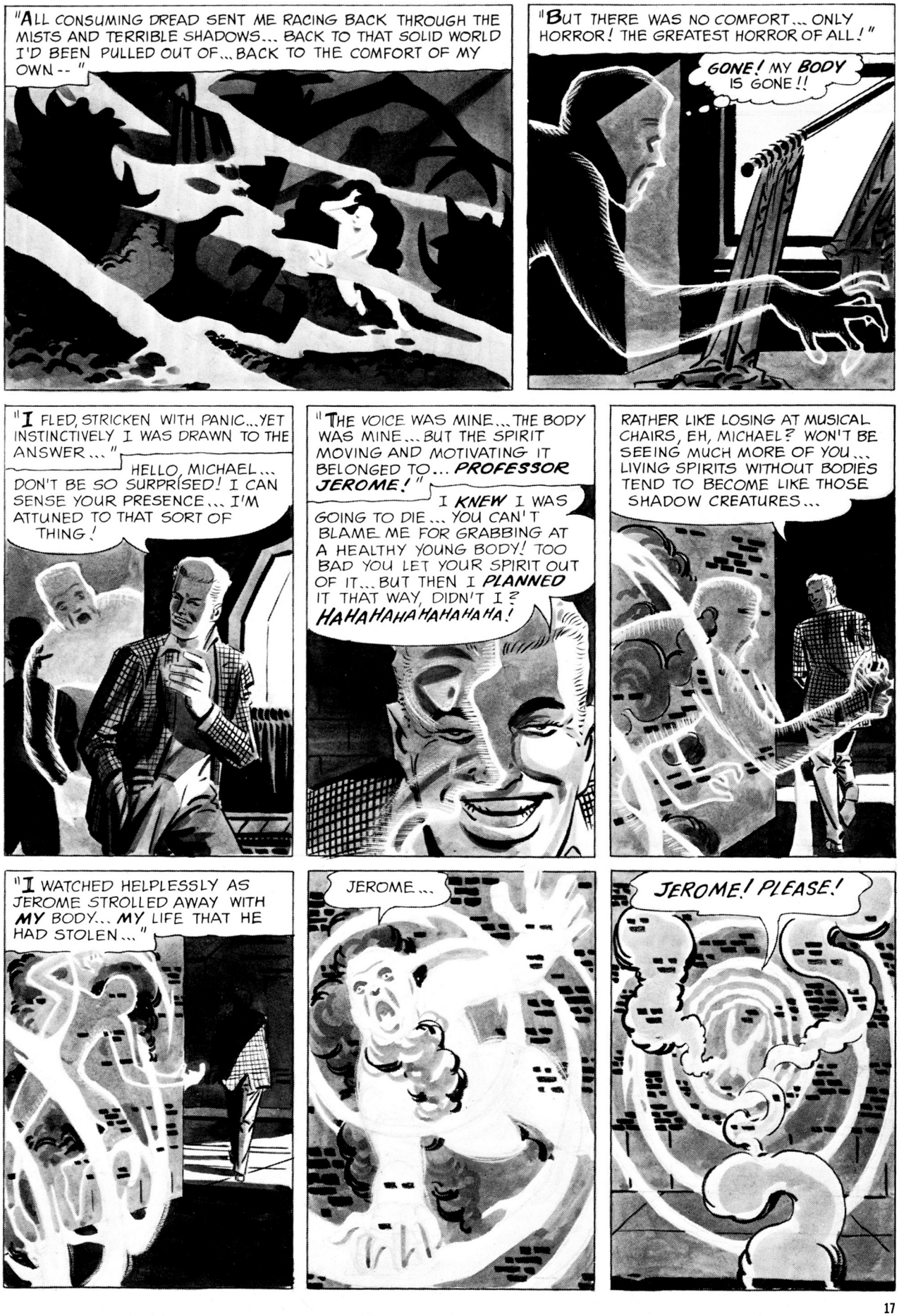
THE
CREEPY™
STORIES

ART BY STEVE DITKO/ SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

THE SOUND OF SPLINTERING WOOD BROUGHT MOST OF THE HOUSE TO THE STAIRS, ONLY TO BE FOLLOWED BY A HUMAN SOUND FAR MORE DREADFUL!
YAAAGGH
NOISE OF A VIOLENT STRUGGLE RENT THE NIGHT...
NO
NOOOOOO
NO
...AND ON THE STREET, OBSERVERS SAW THE ATTIC ROOM PLUNGED INTO PITCH DARKNESS...
...THEN THERE WAS A FEARFUL SILENCE.
WHEN NO FURTHER SOUND ENSUED, THE BUILDING'S SUPER-INTENDENT INCHED OPEN THE ROOM'S BROKEN DOOR, HIS TREMBLING HAND FUMBLING FOR THE LIGHT SWITCH...
ROGERS!
THE LIGHTS... DON'T... TURN THEM ON...! FOR GOD'S SAKE...
TO WHAT WAS OBVIOUSLY LITTLE AVAIL, THE STUDENT WAS MADE COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE...
SOMEONE GET A DOCTOR! THIS MAN'S DYING!
DON'T BOTHER ...S'ALL RIGHT... DOESN'T MATTER ...NOW...
WHO DID IT, ROGERS? WHERE'D HE GO? HOW'D A THING LIKE THIS HAPPEN?
HOW?...
STARTED WITH... PROFESSOR JEROME... AT SCHOOL...

"THE PROFESSOR WAS DOING A PAPER ON HYPNOTISM. HE'D ASKED FOR STUDENT VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST AS SUBJECTS..."
...NOW WHEN I SNAP MY FINGERS, YOU'LL WAKE UP, MICHAEL... READY... NOW!
OKAY GO THIS TIME, PROFESSOR?
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE RESPOND TO HYPNOSIS AS YOU HAVE! YOU'RE THE PERFECT SUBJECT... THAT'S WHY I'M USING YOU FOR MY MOST IMPORTANT EXPERIMENT!
I'VE WAITED YEARS FOR THE OPPORTUNITY! NOW, WITH YOU, IT CAN BE DONE! LONG-RANGE THOUGHT TRANSFER THROUGH HYPNOTIC TRANCE! YOUR MIND... YOUR SPIRIT... WILL ANSWER MY CALL!
I-ISN'T IT RISKY THIS SOON?
TIME IS SHORT! THE CHANCE MAY NEVER COME AGAIN... I'VE ALREADY GIVEN YOU A POST-HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION ...IT MUST BE ... TONIGHT!
"SUDDENLY, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE AIDING THE PROFESSOR IN HIS STUDIES, I FELT AFRAID... YET, IT WAS ALREADY TOO LATE... THE SUGGESTION HAD BEEN PLANTED IN MY MIND..."
"... AND AT MIDNIGHT, IT TOOK EFFECT... I FELT MYSELF SLIPPING INTO A TRANCE ... SPINNING DEEPER AND DEEPER..."
BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG!

"NEVER HAD I FELT SO STRONGLY DRAWN INTO A TRANCE! THEN, I SUDDENLY FELT... FREE! ABLE TO FLOAT... DRIFT... LOOK DOWN UPON MYSELF AND MY ROOM..."
IT'S WORKING! MORE THAN JUST THOUGHT TRANSFER... MY WHOLE SPIRIT'S CUT LOOSE FROM MY BODY!
"THE SIGHT SWIRLED AND VANISHED... NOW I WAS MOVING... SEARCHING... FOLLOWING A COMMAND..."
MICHAEL! THIS WAY MICHAEL! YOU MUST COME!
PROFESSOR JEROME! GOT TO MOVE TOWARD HIS VOICE...
"I WAS MOVING THROUGH A STRANGE HALF-WORLD... A WORLD OF MIST AND SHADOW... TERRIBLE SHADOWS WITH MELTING FACES OF CLOAKED HORROR... NEBULOUS MONSTROSITIES FLOATING... DRIFTING... WATCHING..."
"FINALLY, MY DESTINATION WAS IN SIGHT... I HAD REACHED MY GOAL... EVEN THOUGH THE COMMAND WAS NO LONGER BEING GIVEN..."
PROFESSOR! PROFESSOR!
"... FOR THE MOST LOGICAL OF REASONS!"
DEAD! HEART ATTACK! THE STRAIN MUST HAVE BEEN TOO GREAT FOR HIM...


"ALL CONSUMING DREAD SENT ME RACING BACK THROUGH THE MISTS AND TERRIBLE SHADOWS... BACK TO THAT SOLID WORLD I'D BEEN PULLED OUT OF... BACK TO THE COMFORT OF MY OWN -- "
"BUT THERE WAS NO COMFORT... ONLY HORROR! THE GREATEST HORROR OF ALL!"
GONE! MY BODY IS GONE!!
"I FLED, STRICKEN WITH PANIC... YET INSTINCTIVELY I WAS DRAWN TO THE ANSWER... "
HELLO, MICHAEL... DON'T BE SO SURPRISED! I CAN SENSE YOUR PRESENCE... I'M ATTUNED TO THAT SORT OF THING!
"THE VOICE WAS MINE... THE BODY WAS MINE... BUT THE SPIRIT MOVING AND MOTIVATING IT BELONGED TO... PROFESSOR JEROME!"
I KNEW I WAS GOING TO DIE... YOU CAN'T BLAME ME FOR GRABBING AT A HEALTHY YOUNG BODY! TOO BAD YOU LET YOUR SPIRIT OUT OF IT... BUT THEN I PLANNED IT THAT WAY, DIDN'T I? HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!
RATHER LIKE LOSING AT MUSICAL CHAIRS, EH, MICHAEL? WON'T BE SEEING MUCH MORE OF YOU... LIVING SPIRITS WITHOUT BODIES TEND TO BECOME LIKE THOSE SHADOW CREATURES...
"I WATCHED HELPLESSLY AS JEROME STROLLED AWAY WITH MY BODY... MY LIFE THAT HE HAD STOLEN..."
JEROME...
JEROME! PLEASE!

"I WAS TRAPPED! DOOMED TO WANDER FOR ETERNITY IN THAT HORRIBLE HALF-WORLD UNTIL I DISSOLVED INTO PART OF IT... TRAPPED... DOOMED... WITHOUT A BODY..."
"HOW LONG I FLOATED IN THAT LIMBO OF SHADOWS AND MIST, I CAN'T BE SURE, BUT FINALLY IT CAME TO ME..."
A BODY! THERE IS A SPIRITLESS BODY I CAN USE!
"MORE TIME PASSED AS I SEARCHED... BUT I HAD PURPOSE... DETERMINATION... AND, EVENTUALLY..."
"...I FOUND WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR!"
WALDEN JEROME
WALDEN JEROME
"THE REST WAS NOT EASY, BUT I NOW HAD A BODY, AND SLOWLY, BUT SURELY, THE AWFUL DECAYING THING BEGAN TO WORK FOR ME!"
HARDER...
HARDER!...
NOW!

"TOO MUCH TIME HAD GONE BY! THE THING THAT HAD ONCE BEEN PROFESSOR JEROME'S BODY MOVED AWKWARDLY AND WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY... HARDLY ENOUGH MUSCLE LEFT TO OBEY MY SPIRIT URGING IT FORWARD..."
"EVEN AS I MOVED IT, THE THING WAS COLLAPSING UNDER ME... MINUTE PARTICLES SLOWLY DROPPING AWAY... YET I HAD TO KEEP GOING... ON TO MANHATTAN..."
"...AND PROFESSOR JEROME!"
YAAGGH!
"I HURTLED THE LOATHSOME THING FORWARD, GROPING WITH BONY FINGERS FOR THE LIVING FLESH THAT WAS MY OWN... CLAWING AND STRIKING..."
NO! NO!
NOOOOOOO
"LITTLE BY LITTLE, MY DECAYING INSTRUMENT OF REVENGE WAS CRUMBLING INTO NOTHING... STILL I POUNDED... HIT... SMASHED... GOUGED..."
"AT LAST, IT HAD ITS EFFECT! JEROME WOULD NOT LET HIS SPIRIT BE TRAPPED IN THE BATTERED DYING SHELL... HE ABANDONED THE BODY... MY BODY..."

...MY BODY... MINE!
HE'S... DEAD!
T-THAT STORY...IT COULDN'T BE TRUE... COULD IT?
SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEWS FAILED TO DETERMINE WHICH PERSON ACTULLY TURNED ON THE LIGHT...
OH, MY GOD!
...BUT ALL PRESENT LATER AGREED IT HAD BEEN THE MOST HIDEOUS MISTAKE IN WHAT WAS CONSIDERED TO BE AN EVENING OF HORRORS!
B-BUT... IF THAT T-THING IS ALL THAT'S LEFT OF JEROME'S BODY...
...T-THEN HIS SPIRIT...
SPECULATION CONCERNING THE SPIRIT OF PROFESSOR WALDEN JEROME ENDED ABRUPTLY WHEN HIS OWN WORDS TO THE DISEMBODIED MICHAEL ROGERS WERE RECALLED: "LIVING SPIRITS WITHOUT BODIES TEND TO BECOME LIKE THOSE SHADOW CREATURES..."
AIIIIIIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
SEE WHAT HAPPENED TO JEROME? HE WAS A GUY WHO'D RATHER SWITCH THAN FIGHT... NOW HE'S JUST A SHADOW OF HIS FORMER SELF! OH WELL, ON TO MY NEXT TINGLING ISSUE ... THAT'S THE SPIRIT!

ART BY STEVE DITKO / SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

HAVE YOU EVER COLLECTED ANYTHING? TRULY, DEVOTEDLY COLLECTED? THEN YOU KNOW HOW OBSESSIVE AND DEMANDING IT CAN BE... AND HOW YOU CAN BE AT THE MERCY OF SOMEONE LIKE MURCH...
JUST LOOKING. THOUGHT I'D SEE IF ANYTHING NEW HAD COME IN...
YOU'RE A MAN OF STRANGE TASTES, MR. DANFORTH... THINGS YOU WANT ARE HARD TO COME BY.
HE WAS DISGUSTING AND OVERBEARING, BUT SOMEHOW, HE COULD GET THINGS... THE RARE, OBSCURE, EVER FORBIDDEN, WOULD ALWAYS FIND THEIR WAY INTO HIS HANDS... SO, I ENDURED...
YET I'VE FOUND 'EM FOR YOU, HAVEN'T I? SOONER OR LATER, OL' MURCH GETS 'EM... THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF GILLES DE RAIS... THE SAWNEY BEANE TRIAL NOTES... THE LANDRU DIARY...
OCCULT
...OR MAYBE EVEN THAT ONE EVERY FANCIER OF THE OCCULT DREAMS OF... MAYBE EVEN THE FIRST EDITION OF THE MARQUIS LEMODE'S "DARK VISIONS"!
WHERE IS IT, MURCH?! HAVE YOU BEEN HOLDING OUT ON ME...? TANTALIZING... TORMENTING...
GENTLY, GENTLY, MR. DANFORTH...
I WANTED TO CRUSH THAT FAT SWINE! SMASH THE DECAYING TEETH IN HIS FOUL-BREATHED MOUTH... INSTEAD, I LISTENED... LISTENED TO HIS WHINING, TEASING VOICE....
DIDN'T SAY I HAD IT, MR. DANFORTH... BUT I'VE A LEAD... A CHANCE...
LEMODE'S "DARK VISIONS"... I'VE HUNTED OBJECTS OF THE BIZARRE IN EVERY CORNER OF THE WORLD AND NEVER HAD MORE THAN VAGUE HINTS... TO THINK THERE'S A HOPE...

"THE MARQUIS HAD CAST A LONG DARK SHADOW OVER THE 18TH CENTURY... BRILLIANT PHILOSOPHER, INSPIRED POET, UNEXCELLED ARTIST! HE BECAME THE HUB OF THE FAST-SPINNING WHEEL OF AVANTGARDE SOCIETY..."
"HIS ABILITIES SPRANG FROM SINISTER ORIGINS AND HIS ENTIRE LIFE WAS DEVOTED TO A PURSUIT OF THE MOST UNSPEAKABLE EVILS... A KNOWN PARTICIPATER IN RITES OF DEVIL-WORSHIP, THERE WERE EVEN RUMORS OF HUMAN SACRIFICE..."
"THEN, AT AGE 29, ALL HIS PROFUSE TALENTS AND CORRUPT DRIVES JELLED INTO ONE MASTERPIECE... LEMODE SECLUDED HIMSELF FOR ONE LONG TERRIBLE MONTH, REACHING INTO MADNESS AND BEYOND, AND PRODUCED HIS SUPERB BLEND OF PHANTASMAGORIAL DRAWING AND MACABRE POETRY, THE ULTIMATE OCCULT WORK, HIS UNPARALLELED DARK VISIONS!"
"LIMITED EDITIONS WERE PRIVATELY PRINTED, CIRCULATED TO THE JADED AND DECADENT, AND INEVITABLY, TO AN OUTRAGED PUBLIC... AN INQUISITION RESULTED, AND ALL THE MARQUIS MONSTROUS ACTIVITIES BECAME KNOWN!"
"HIS ROYAL RANK COULD NOT SAVE HIM, ALTHOUGH BURNING AT THE STAKE WAS RULED OUT IN FAVOR OF THE GUILLOTINE. HE WENT TO HIS DEATH UNREPENTANT... ALL COPIES OF THE BOOK WERE CONFISCATED AND DESTROYED..."

WE KNOW DIFFERENT, DON'T WE, MR. DANFORTH? A FEW COPIES HAVE SURVIVED... SMUGGLED THROUGH THE YEARS... AND I THINK I CAN GET ONE! IT WON'T BE CHEAP... NOT CHEAP AT ALL!
NOW YOU KNOW WHY I HATED MURCH... ALWAYS GOADING, PRODDING, HINTING, TANTALIZING... AND I HAD TO RESPOND! DART LIKE AN ANIMAL FOR A CARROT ON A STRING... IT WAS MURCH'S GAME AND IT DELIGHTED HIM!
ANY PRICE, MURCH! I MUST HAVE IT... ANY AMOUNT!
PATIENCE, PATIENCE... WE'VE NO DEAL YET! I'VE GOT TO SEE RAMSEY, THE IMPORTER, TONIGHT... HE'S PROVIDED ME WITH MOST OF THE REALLY GOOD ITEMS IN THE PAST... PERHAPS...
BUT IN HIS PETTY TYRANNY, MURCH WAS A FOOL! SEVERAL TIMES IN HIS DESIRE TO TORMENT, TO MAKE ME WAIT LONGER, PLEAD AND PAY MORE, HE'D MENTIONED RAMSEY... BRAGGED OF HIS SOURCE... A MISTAKE I COULD NOW MAKE HIM REGRET.
CALL ME AS SOON AS YOU'VE HEARD ANYTHING, ANYTHING AT ALL!
IN GOOD TIME, MR. DANFORTH... JUST BE PATIENT!
CASH WAS NEEDED... LOTS OF IT, "DARK VISIONS" WAS NOT AN ITEM FOR CHECKS AND RECORDS! I HAD TO ACT QUICKLY TO BEAT MURCH, BUT READY FUNDS WERE NO PROBLEM. THEY NEVER HAD BEEN SINCE MY MARRIAGE...
COLIN! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? BUYING MORE BOOKS, OCCULT JUNK?! YOU'RE NEVER HOME... NEVER CALL... NEVER SPEND ANY TIME WITH YOUR OWN WIFE... JUST MY MONEY!
NOT NOW, AUDREY, I'M IN A HURRY...
YOU CAN'T GO ON NEGLECTING ME! I'M A HUMAN BEING WITH PRIDE AND FEELINGS...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THAT'S ON HAND FOR EMERGENCIES ...ANSWER ME!!
I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE THIS TREATMENT ANY LONGER, COLIN! DO YOU HEAR ME?! I'M NOT--
SLAM!

RAMSEY WAS A WEALTHY, SUCCESSFUL MAN. HE LIVED IN A TOWNHOUSE ON A QUIET RESIDENTIAL BLOCK... BUT EVEN THE QUIET OF THE VERY RICH CAN SOMETIMES BE DISTURBED...
WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT'S GOING ON?
MURDER! SOMEBODY TOOK A SILVER CANDLESTICK TO THIS GUY RAMSEY'S SKULL... GOT AWAY CLEAN!
WAS IT A THIEF? ANYTHING TAKEN?
DOUBT IT... ONLY ROOM DISTURBED IN THE WHOLE PLACE WAS THE LIBRARY... WHO'D WANNA STEAL A BOOK?
THERE WAS NO NEED FOR FURTHER QUESTIONS. I TURNED AND HAILED A CAB. THERE WAS ONLY ONE PLACE LEFT TO GO...
HE'S IN THERE... GLOATING... REVELING... WAITING FOR ME!
EXCITEMENT AND ANTICIPATION WERE WELLING UP WITHIN ME... I ASSAILED THE DOOR, POUNDING AND SHOUTING... MURCH WAS SLOW, SLOWER THAN EVER! MAINTAINING THE TORMENT...
GO AWAY! I'VE NOTHING FOR YOU...
DON'T WANT TO SEE ANYONE! GO AWAY, DANFORTH!
YOU FAT PIG! ENOUGH OF YOUR GAMES... I KNOW YOU'VE GOT IT! I KNOW WHAT YOU PAID FOR IT!!
NO! THERE'S NOTHING!... STAY OUT! LEAVE ME ALONE!

THEN I SAW IT! NO ONE HAD EVER DESCRIBED WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE, NOT EVEN A SLIGHT HINT OR DESCRIPTION, YET I WOULD HAVE KNOWN IT ANYWHERE!
LEAVE YOU ALONE, MURCH? BEFORE WE'VE EVEN TALKED ABOUT... THIS?!
MURCH BROKE AWAY FROM ME... MOVING HIS OBESE HULK OF A BODY FASTER THAN HE EVER HAD...
THERE'S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT! IT'S MINE NOW! I DON'T WANT TO SELL IT, PART WITH IT! I'M KEEPING THE BOOK... KEEPING IT!
BLOOD COURSED THROUGH MY VEINS IN HEAVY POUNDING STROKES ...WHY WAS HE SUCH A FOOL? WHY COULDN'T HE TELL THE TIME FOR GAMES, PLAYING AND TOYING, WAS OVER?
MURCH... ALL THIS IS YOURS! GIVE ME THE BOOK... RIGHT NOW!
IT'S NOT FOR SALE! I'M KEEPING THE BOOK!
SWINE!! @#mm*z!! PIG!!!
HOW I HATED HIM! HOW I HATED HIS QUIVERING CORPULENT BODY BENEATH ME... HATED THE UNSHAVEN FOLDS OF FLESH THAT WERE HIS NECK... HATED THE SPITTLE-FLECKED JOWLS OF HIS DISGUSTING FACE TURNING NOW WHITE, NOW RED, NOW PURPLE...
... AND THEN, THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT TO HATE.
MINE! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS... FINALLY MINE!

THERE WAS NO TIME FOR ADMIRATION OR APPRECIATION... LEMODE'S MASTERWORK NEEDED CAREFUL STUDY, FULL ATTENTION, AS BEFITTED THE PRODUCTS OF GENIUS, NO MATTERED HOW WARPED...

I CAN'T ***STAND*** ANYMORE OF THIS! COLIN, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? WHAT DID YOU DO WITH THE MONEY? ***COLIN! THE MONEY!***

THE MONEY, INDEED... IN MY HASTE TO LEAVE, I'D LEFT IT SCATTERED AROUND MURCH'S BLOATED CORPSE. CARELESS, BUT UNIMPORTANT... WITH "DARK VISIONS" UNDER MY ARM, WHAT COULD BE IMPORTANT?

A BOOK?! EVERYTHING MY FATHER LEFT ME SQUANDERED ON JUNK! NO MORE! DO YOU HEAR ME, COLIN? NO MORE! NO MOR---

I'M GOING INTO THE STUDY, SEE THAT I'M NOT DISTURBED!

NOW, I AM ALONE AND THE BOOK BEFORE ME... HERE, IN THE STUDY, SURROUNDED BY THE BOOKS AND OBJECTS I HAVE COLLECTED OVER THE YEARS, THE MARQUIS'S FORBIDDEN VOLUME HAS AT LAST THE SETTING IT NEEDS! WITH TREMBLING FINGERS, I TURN THE PAGES...

THE PRINTING... DESIGN... MASTERFUL... PERFECT!

LATER THERE WILL BE TIME TO TRANSLATE THE DELICATELY CALLIGRAPHED TEXT, FOR THE MOMENT I CAN ONLY DRINK IN THE FINELY WROUGHT TERROR OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS...

BEARDSLEY... DORÉ... BOSCH... THEY ALL HAD THE ABILITY, BUT NONE POSSESSED LEMODE'S VISION... ***NONE!***

HERE IS A MAN WHO LOOKED BEYOND THE GRAVE, BEYOND THE DARKEST UNKNOWN CORNERS OF THE MIND, INTO HELL ITSELF! EACH PAGE IS MORE FEARFUL THAN THE LAST...

W-WHAT?! I DON'T BELIEVE IT... HE SEEMS TO HAVE FORESEEN HIS OWN ***D-DEATH...***

NOW THERE IS AN INCREASING MOISTNESS TO MY FINGERS, EACH BREATH COMES QUICKER AND SHORTER ...I TURN THE PAGES MORE RAPIDLY...

I-IMPOSSIBLE... THE CLOTHING AND SETTINGS IN THESE LATER ILLUSTRATIONS... THEY GO BEYOND LEMODE'S CENTURY... THROUGH THE YEARS... HE COULDN'T HAVE...

DOWN IN MY THROAT, A SCREAM IS STRIVING TO BURST OUT, BUT I KNOW IT WILL NEVER COME... MY FASCINATION IS FAR TOO GREAT...
MURCH!
RAMSEY... HOW?!
EVERY NERVE ENDING TINGLES, MY HEART POUNDS LOUD AND FAST, BUT I MUST KNOW... MUST LEARN ... WHAT'S NEXT... THE SOUND OF THE PAGE TURNING IS LIKE A BRASH OF LIGHTNING...
ME! A FEW HOURS AGO... B-BUT, THERE ARE SO MANY MORE PAGES LEFT... WHAT CAN...
SHUT THE BOOK! THROW IT AWAY... DON'T LOOK ANYMORE! DON'T TOUCH THE PAGE... DON'T TURN IT... DON'T LOO---
N-NO... NO!!
THAT NOISE! SOMEONE'S ENTERED THE ROOM BEHIND ME...GOT TO BREAK FREE OF THE BOOK... TURN AND SEE WHO IT I---
SPLAT
"TSK, TSK! DANFORTH NEVER GOT TO FINISH HIS BOOK... IT FINISHED HIM! NOW WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT THE REST OF THE PICTURES WERE LIKE... MAYBE, RABID READER, THERE WAS ONE OF YOU!"

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

WHAT'S UP MUST COME DOWN, EH, BREATHLESS BROWSERS? IT'S NOT A BIRD, NOT A PLANE, AND CERTAINLY NOT YOU KNOW WHO... YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR THE FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH A CREEPY CREATURE WHOSE TRADE IS BEGINNING TO BRANCH OUT... NOW, MEET THE...
BEAST MAN!
EEEEEEE-E-E-E-E!

...THE DREAM ENDED WITH THE THING KILLIN' THE GIRL, WALSH... LIKE A WILD BEAST! ONLY IT AIN'T JUST A WILD BEAST...
...IT'S ME!
JUST A NIGHTMARE, AMES... SHOULDN'T LET A NIGHTMARE UPSET YOU! EVERYBODY HAS 'EM!
NOT LIKE THIS... NOT THIS REAL! AND I KEEP HAVIN' 'EM... EVER SINCE THE OPERATION! SHOULDN'T HAVE LET YOU AND DOC TALK ME INTO THAT OPERATION!
WHAT KINDA TALK IS THAT? WE SAVED YOUR LIFE ...SAVED THE BUSINESS TOO!
ACROSS THE NIGHT AIR COMES THE SOUND OF STAMPING FEET... OF WHISTLES AND CAT-CALLS... NOISES OF THE IMPATIENT, THE UNRULY...
GORILLA AMES
BUT THIS MORNING, WALSH... MY CLOTHES ALL RIPPED AND TORN ...YOU SAY I DID IT IN MY SLEEP... YOU CAN'T BE SURE! MAYBE...
MAYBE NOTHIN'! COM'N BEFORE THE YOKELS TEAR THE TENT DOWN!
WHAT TOOK SO LONG, YA BIG APE!
HEY, GORILLA! TONIGHT YOU'RE GONNA LOSE YOUR HIDE!
DO THEY HAFTA CALL ME THAT? I HATE THAT NAME... HATE IT!
$100 TO ANYONE STAYING 3 ROUNDS WITH THE GORILLA
FORGET THE NAME, THINK OF THE TAKE! LOOKIT THIS CROWD ...THE RUBES LOVE TO HATE YOU...
SHOULD'VE QUIT WHEN I WAS GOING TO... BEFORE THE OPERATION ...THE DAY I TOLD WALSH...

QUIT?!! ARE YOU NUTS?? WE'RE UNDER CONTRACT FOR THIS TOUR... IN DEBT FOR EQUIPMENT... ALREADY ADVERTISED IN CITIES ALONG THE ROAD...
SAW A SPECIALIST IN TOWN TODAY 'BOUT THOSE PAINS I'VE BEEN GETTING... SAYS IT'S MY HEART... SAYS IF I KEEP FIGHTIN' THEY'LL KEEP GETTIN' WORSE!
WALSH, I AIN'T CRAZY 'BOUT THIS CARNIVAL BUSINESS ANYHOW, NOW IT COULD KILL ME ... NEVER BEEN MUCH ON THINKIN', BUT THERE MUST BE SOMEWAY AROUND IT...
BIG LUG LIKE YOU WITH A BUM TICKER... AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT! I'LL FIGURE SOMETHIN' OUT!
AND WITHIN A WEEK, WALSH HAD THE ANSWER...
T-THE DOC? HE'S NOTHIN' BUT A VET FOR THE SHOW ANIMALS... AND A RUMMY TO BOOT!
HE WAS ALSO A BRILLIANT SURGEON BEFORE THE AUTHORITIES NAILED HIM FOR UNORTHODOX PRACTICES... TRUST ME!
WITH A BAD HEART, CERTAIN TO KILL IN A FEW YEARS, WHAT WAS THERE TO LOSE?
THIS SEDATIVE WILL PUT YOU OUT IN A FEW MINUTES... LET'S GET YOU IN TO THE OPERATING TABLE...
THERE'S NO SWEAT, AMES! I WOULDN'T RISK THIS IF I THOUGHT ANYTHING'D GO WRONG...
THE GRIP OF THE SEDATIVE WAS IMMEDIATE, ALLOWING ONLY ONE LAST QUICK GLIMPSE BEFORE OVERPOWERING...
T-THE GORILLA... THE ONE... THEY HAD TO SHOOT... THIS MORNING...
SHOOT? YES, BUT IN THE HEAD... HE STILL HAS A FINE, HEALTHY...
--HEART!

THE SOUND OF THE GONG DRIVES AMES'S TORTURED THOUGHTS BACK TO THE PRESENT... BACK TO THE GLARE OF OVERHEAD LIGHTS AND THE POUNDING LEATHER... HARD WILD PUNCHES RAIN IN ON HIM TO BE IGNORED, SLUGGED OFF, AND RETURNED!
HE FIGHTS WITHOUT STYLE, WITHOUT TECHNIQUE, SLASHING AND JABBING WITH AN INSTINCTIVE FURY... AN ANIMAL VICIOUSNESS THAT COMES NOT FROM TRAINING, BUT... FROM THE HEART!
THEN, IT IS ALL OVER UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, THE NEXT TOWN...
HERE'S YOUR CUT! YOU SHOULD GIVE THOSE LOCAL BOYS MORE OF CHANCE BEFORE FINISHING THEM... WE'RE GONNA RUN OUT OF TAKERS!
SOMETHIN' HAPPENS TO ME IN THE RING, WALSH... JUST LIKE IN THOSE DREAMS! I GO WILD... C-CAN'T HELP IT... EVER SINCE THE OPERATION!
I GET MORE LIKE AN ANIMAL EVERY DAY...
...AND NIGHTS I DON'T EVEN WANNA KNOW ABOUT!

AWWOWRRRR
THE ANIMALS KNOW... THEY CAN SENSE THE GORILLA IN ME! IT'S TAKING OVER... WHEN I SLEEP, IT DOES COMPLETELY! IT ISN'T JUST A DREAM... I'M A... A...
BEAST MAN! HALF-GORILLA, HALF-MAN... BEAST MAN!
YOU! GO 'WAY, DOC! YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH TO ME ALREADY... TOO MUCH...
WASSA MATTER, BEASTIE? YOU DON' LIKE BEIN' PART ANIMAL? UNHAPPY 'BOUT MY OPERASHUN ... MAYBE THE OL' DOC CAN FIXSH YOU BACK... MAKE YOU HUMAN 'GAIN ...
YOU WHISKEY-SOAKED BUTCHER! ARE YOU TELLING THE TRUTH? CAN YOU HELP ME? CAN YOU?
TAKE IT EASY, EASY... I CAN MAKE YOU LIKE BEFORE ... S'GONNA COST THOUGH... CAN'T DO IT F'R NOTHIN...
THINK I WON'T PAY TO BE NORMAL AGAIN? HERE, HERE! AS MUCH AS YOU WANT... HERE!
STEP INNA TENT... HAVE A LITTLE DRINK ... THEN FIXSH YOU ALL UP... BE Y'OLD SELF AGAIN...

THE CRIES OF THE MENAGERIE BEASTS ECHO ABOUT THE NOW DESERTED CARNIVAL GROUNDS FALLING ON UNINTERESTED EARS...
HA! THE BIG JERK LOOKED REALLY CONVINCED WHEN HE RAN OFF... REALLY BELIEVES HE TURNS INTO A GORILLA!
JUST LIKE HE REALLY BELIEVED HE HAD A BAD HEART!
RELUCTANT TO BELIEVE HE MIGHT LOSE HIS MEAL TICKET, WALSH HAD RECHECKED AMES'S CONDITION WITH THE HEART SPECIALIST...
B-BUT YOUR X-RAYS SHOW HIS TICKER'S OKAY! THE BIG APE LIED...
PHYSICALLY OKAY... SUBCONSCIOUSLY, HE HATES BOXING, TRIES TO ESCAPE IT WITH ATTACKS INDUCED BY HIS OWN MIND... PSYCHOSOMATIC, BUT NO LESS FATAL... ONLY BY QUITTING CAN HE BE CURED!
YET THE VERY CAUSE OF AMSES'S CONDITION SUGGESTED A CURE...
IF HE CONVINCED HIMSELF HE'S GOT A BUM HEART, HE CAN CONVINCE HIMSELF HE'S GOT A NEW HEART... THE HEART OF AN ANIMAL MORE OF A FIGHTER THAN AMES COULD EVER BE!
THE CUT ON HIS CHEST'LL LOOK JUST LIKE AN INCISION WAS MADE... FAR AS HE'LL EVER KNOW, I DID OPERATE ON HIM TONIGHT!
A CURE THAT WOULD PREVENT HIS EVER TRYING TO QUIT AGAIN!
FROM TIME TO TIME I'LL GIVE HIM A SHOT OF THIS... THE LUG'LL THINK IT'S POST-OPERATIONAL TREATMENT! ACTUALLY IT PUTS HIM IN A TRANCELIKE STATE, OPEN TO SUGGESTION...
AND THE THINGS I'M GONNA SUGGEST'LL HAVE HIM CONVINCED HE'S MORE APE THAN MAN! HE WON'T BE FIT FOR ANYTHING BUT THIS RACKET!
RIPPING HIS CLOTHING AFTER THE DREAMS I SUGGESTED REALLY DID THE TRICK ON THE POOR BOOB...
NOW ALL I GOTTA DO IS KEEP DOC HAPPY SO HE DOESN'T SPILL THE BEANS!
DOC! HEY, YOU OLD RUMPOT... LET'S GO INTO TOWN! HIT A FEW NIGHTSPOTS... DOC?
@#☆*!! DARK... WHEREZAT LIGHT CORD?

DOC! OH, LORD... LOOKS LIKE SOME WILD ANIMAL GOT AT HIM!
ONE DID, WALSH... ME!
A-AMES... YOU COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS! I-IT'S IMPOSSIBLE... YOU'RE NO KILLER! THERE'S NOTHIN' WRONG WITH Y---
THAT'S WHAT DOC KEPT SAYIN'... LYIN' TO ME WHEN I NEEDED HELP! LYIN' UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE ... UNTIL I CHANGED!
A-AMES, KEEP BACK! IT'S ALL A MISTAKE... DOC WASN'T LYIN'... YOU'RE ALRIGHT!
T-THE OPERATION WAS A TRICK... WE DIDN'T REALLY DO ANYTHING ...N-NOTHIN' AT ALL!
WE DIDN'T SWITCH THE HEARTS! AMES. YOU GOTTA LISTEN ... IT'S ALL IN YOUR MIND! AMES! PLEASE!...
AS THE BONE-CRUSHING HANDS OF THE BEAST MAN CLOSE ON HIS CRUMPLING BODY, WALSH HAS NO TIME TO APPRECIATE THE AMAZING JOB HE HAS DONE IN RE-CHANNELING AMES'S PSYCHOSOMATIC NATURE ...ONLY TIME TO SCREAM!
... IT'S ALL IN YOUR MIND! EEEYAHHHH!
HMMMMMM! LOOKS LIKE A CASE OF MAY THE BEAST MAN WIN! AND WITH ALL THE POSITIVE THINKING AMES HAS GOING FOR HIM, HE WON'T LOSE HIS GRIP ON THE SITUATION ... OR WALSH! HEE, HEE!

PROLOGUE:
IT HAD BEEN A LONG DAY. OUTSIDE THE GRAY DUSK WAS GIVING WAY TO EARLY WINTER DARKNESS. PSYCHIATRIST STEVEN NIGEL FELT TIRED...
DOCTOR, A MAN JUST CAME IN... VERY INSISTENT... SAY'S IT'S URGENT THAT HE SEE YOU...
NO MORE, LOUISE. I JUST WANT TO CATCH UP ON MY PAPER WORK AND GO HOME. RECOMMEND SOMEONE ON EMERGENCY CALL TO HIM!
OUT OF MY WAY! I'M GOING IN THERE! WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME -- I MUST SEE HIM! I MUST!
DOCTOR NIGEL, I COULDN'T STOP HIM! HE'S A MADMAN!
I CAN'T WAIT! SOMEONE'S GOT TO HELP ME NOW! CAN'T YOU UNDERSTAND? NOW!!
YOU'RE A PSYCHIATRIST... FOR GOD'S SAKE, HELP ME!
DO YOU WANT ME TO CALL THE POLICE, DOCTOR?
STOP IT MAN! GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF!!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, LOUISE. LEAVE US ALONE.
NOW SUPPOSE YOU SIT DOWN AND TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT... JUST WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?
I... I'M... A WEREWOLF!

WELL KIDDIES, IF YOU THINK THAT'S SOMETHING TO HOWL ABOUT, WAIT TILL YOU RIP THROUGH THE REST OF THIS ***LYCANTHROPIC LEGEND*** BOILING UP FROM THE...

BLOOD OF THE WEREWOLF!

I THINK YOU'D BETTER START AT THE BEGINNING. TELL ME EVERYTHING...

YEAH, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... MAYBE I SHOULD'VE TOLD SOMEONE A LONG TIME AGO! MY NAME'S CARL HOLT AN' THE WHOLE THING STARTED WHEN I WAS FIRED FROM MY JOB...

...THAT SENT ME ON A BENDER THAT DIDN'T END TILL I CLOSED HALF THE BARS IN TOWN. WITH NO PLACE TO GO BUT HOME, I DECIDED TO TAKE A SHORT-CUT THROUGH THE PARK...

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

WOK!
FOR A LONG TIME I FLOATED IN LIMBO, DISTANTLY CONSCIOUS OF THINGS GOING ON AROUND ME... A FIGURE IN BLACK STANDING OVER ME.. BEING DRAGGED INTO A CAR, LOOKING UP AT AN OLD BROWNSTONE...
...THEN EVERY-THING CRYSTAL-IZED AND I THINK I SCREAMED!
GOOD! I FEARED I MIGHT HAVE HIT YOU TOO HARD... YOU MUST UNDERSTAND IT'S NOT MY INTENTION TO HURT YOU IF AT ALL POSSIBLE!
W-WHAT... THIS IS SOME KIND OF... DOCTORS... OFFICE...
I'M NOT A KILLER... MURDER ISN'T IN ME. PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BETTER IF IT WERE! BELIEVE ME... I'M SORRY FOR WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN TO YOU, BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY!
THIS IS C-CRAZY! WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT.. WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO DO?!
THEN I NOTICED THE NOISES... HORRIBLE RASPING GRUNTS AND CRIES...
TH... THAT SOUND! LIKE AN... ANIMAL OF SOME SORT...
UNFORTUNATELY, YOU'RE NOT WRONG! TWIST YOUR HEAD TO RIGHT... IT'S ONLY FAIR YOU MEET MY SON!

MY GOD! IT'S... IT'S A...
YES, MY SON IS A WEREWOLF!
NOW DO YOU KNOW MY BURDEN? A BRILLIANT DEVOTED BOY...EVERYTHING A PARENT COULD ASK! YET UNDER THE CURSED RAYS OF THE FULL MOON, HE BECOMES A BLOOD-LUSTING BEAST!
YOU CAN UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH I WANT TO SAVE HIM...
LYCANTHROPY IS A DESEASE OF THE BLOOD AS WELL AS THE MIND... AS A DOCTOR, I CAN TREAT THAT... BY TOTALLY REPLACING THE TAINTED WITH THE PURE!
Y-YOU'RE MAD! YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO DO THIS TO ME... NO RIGHT!
I'VE THE RIGHT TO PLACE MY SON ABOVE A DRUNKEN DERELICT! THIS WILL BE PAINLESS, AND THE TRANSFER SHOULD ENABLE YOU TO SURVIVE...
NO, NO! YOU'RE WRONG... I'VE GOT A WIFE... A LIFE OF MY OWN! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! YOU CAN'T! CAN'T....
THE OLD MAN BENT LOW AND I FELT A SLIGHT STING INSIDE MY ELBOW... I SCREAMED ALL THE WAY INTO THE ENFOLDING DARKNESS.
AAIEEE!

I AWOKE BACK IN THE PARK, IN THE SPOT WHERE I'D FALLEN THE NIGHT BEFORE IN THE COLD MORNING LIGHT, IT ALL COULD HAVE BEEN AN ALCOHOLIC DELUSION ...EVEN SO, I RAN ALL THE WAY HOME.
ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE ME CRAZY? WHAT GOT INTO YOU? I'VE CALLED THE POLICE... EVERYWHERE! DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY CARL... ANYTHING?
THERE WAS NOTHING... IT WAS ALL IMPOSSIBLE! HOW COULD I EXPECT OTHERS TO BELIEVE WHEN I COULDN'T BE SURE MYSELF...
DARLING, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'VE BEEN LIKE A ZOMBIE SINCE THAT NIGHT... DON'T WORRY SO! ANOTHER JOB'LL TURN UP...
CARL, YOU LISTENING? CARL? WHY DO YOU KEEP STARING LIKE THAT?!
THEN SLOWLY, LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE CHANGES BEGAN...
MY EYEBROWS WEREN'T ALWAYS LIKE THIS! THEY'RE GETTING BUSHIER...GROWING TOGETHER!
HAIR ON MY PALMS! ANOTHER OF THE SIGNS... IT WASN'T A DREAM! THE OLD MAN DID IT... I KNOW HE DID IT... I KNOW IT!
CARL, WILL YOU SIT DOWN YOU'VE BEEN LIKE A CAGED ANIMAL ALL EVENING! PACING THE FLOOR, RUNNING OVER TO THE WINDOW, PACING SOME MORE... OVER AND OVER...
CARL, DO YOU HEAR ME?
CARL!

I RUSHED INTO THE NIGHT RUNNING AS FAR AND AS FAST AS I COULD UNTIL AT LAST I STUMBLED AND FELL WRITHING TO THE GROUND, THE RAYS OF THE FULL MOON SCORCHING ME LIKE THE DESERT SUN, MAKING THE VERY BLOOD WITHIN ME BOIL LIKE A SURGING VOLCANO...
THAT NIGHT I BECAME THE SAME BLOODLUSTING CARNAL MAN-HUNTER THAT THE OLD DOCTOR'S SON HAD ONCE BEEN. FOR THE FIRST TIME I STALKED MY PREY AND RAN IT TO EARTH...
AAOOWW!
YAAA
...AS I WOULD DO IN THE FUTURE, TIME AND TIME AGAIN!
I NEVER WENT BACK HOME. FOR MY WIFE'S SAKE *I COULDN'T!* FOR MONTHS NOW, IT'S BEEN LIKE THIS...
I KEEP LOOKING FOR BROWNSTONES WITH DOCTORS' OFFICES, BURSTING IN ON THEM... JUST LIKE I DID TODAY... HOPING TO FIND THAT OLD FIEND WHO DID THIS TO ME!

BUT I CAN'T KEEP ON WITH IT... I NEED HELP! YOU'VE READ ABOUT FULL MOON KILLINGS IN THE PAPER, YOU MUST KNOW I'M TELLING THE TRUTH! YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING NOW! IMMEDIATELY!
DOCTOR NIGEL OPENED HIS DESK DRAWER, DROPPING PAD AND PENCIL INTO IT WITH AN AIR OF FINALITY...
IT ISN'T THAT SIMPLE, MR HOLT. TREATMENT OF A PSYCHOSIS SUCH AS THIS TAKES TIME... YEARS...
PSYCHOSIS? DOCTOR, I'M A WEREWOLF... THERE IS NO TIME!
NO TIME AT ALL!
HOLT, YOU MUSTN'T PERSIST IN THIS FANTASY! CAN'T YOU SEE THE PATTERN? THE SCHIZOPHRENIC RETREAT FROM REALITY AND RESPONS---
YOU FOOL! YOU UNBELIEVING FOOL! NOW YOU'RE GOING TO...
...DIE-EEEEYYOOOWWWRRR!

KA-BLAM! BLAM!
NIGEL CONTINUED FIRING UNTIL THE REVOLVER CLICKED ON EMPTY CHAMBERS, CONTINUED FIRING THE REVOLVER THAT HAD BEEN IN HIS DESK DRAWER SINCE FIRST HEARING OF THE FULL MOON MURDERS...
THE BEAST-THING THAT HAD BEEN CARL HOLT SLUMPED STIFFLY OVER THE DESK AND MELTED INTO HUMAN FORM THE DOOR BURST OPEN AND THE HUB-BUB OF SPECTATORS FROM ADJOINING OFFICES REACHED IN...
DOCTOR NIGEL, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? I'VE SENT FOR THE POLICE!
H-HE WAS A MANIAC! TRIED TO KILL ME! I FIRED JUST IN TIME...
WITH THE SOUND OF SIRENS, THE CROWD OF THE CURIOUS DISPERSED, EXCEPT FOR ONE MAN...
EVERYTHING OKAY, STEVEN?
POLICE MAY BE A LITTLE CURIOUS ABOUT THE SILVER BULLETS, THAT'S ALL. JUST CHANCE THE WAY HE BARGED IN HERE. LUCKY HE DIDN'T PICK YOUR OFFICE TO ENTER FIRST...
...RIGHT, DAD?
DON'T FEEL TOO SORRY FOR POOR OL' CARL FELLOW FIENDS, LOOK AT ALL THAT SILVER HE COLLECTED... AND THE ONLY THING DOCTOR NIGEL GOT OUT OF IT WAS TIRED BLOOD! NOW, WHY NOT WAKE UP YOUR BLOOD WITH MY NEXT LITTLE TERROR-TRANSFUSION?

AUTUMN IS ON THE WIND. A HINT OF CHILL TO COME TINGES THE BREEZE THAT SCATTERS DRY LEAVES ACROSS THE GLOOM OF A STARLESS NIGHT, AND MAKES DYING TREES CREAK AND MOAN, THEIR BRANCHES SCRATCHING AT THE DARKNESS... AND SO OUR PULSATING PROLOGUE BEGINS, AS TWO POLICEMEN SLOWLY PACE THEIR GLOOMY BEAT...
MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT, AND I GET BROKEN IN FOR THIS GRAVE-YARD TOUR! HOW CAN YOU STAND THE QUIET, DOWNEY?
DON'T LET IT FOOL YOU, LAD... WE'VE HAD OUR SHARE OF TROUBLES AROUND HERE LATEL---
YAAHHHHH!
L-LORD...THAT SCREAM! IT SOUNDED LIKE IT CAME FROM THE...THE...
THE CEMETERY! INSIDE...QUICKLY!
CAME FROM OVER THIS WAY---WHAT'S THIS? LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY DROPPED SOMETHIN'...
A SPADE...AND THERE'S B-BLOOD ON IT!
HEE HEE HEE
ALL RIGHT! WHO'S THERE? COME ON OUT! NOW!
NO? THEN WE'RE COMIN' IN!
HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE
WHAT TH---I KNOW THIS PUNK! GOT A RECORD FOR GRAVEROBBIN'...
B-BUT, DOWNEY... HE'S GONE OUT OF HIS MIND! AND HIS HAIR... IT'S TURNED SNOW WHITE!
HEE HEE HEE HEE

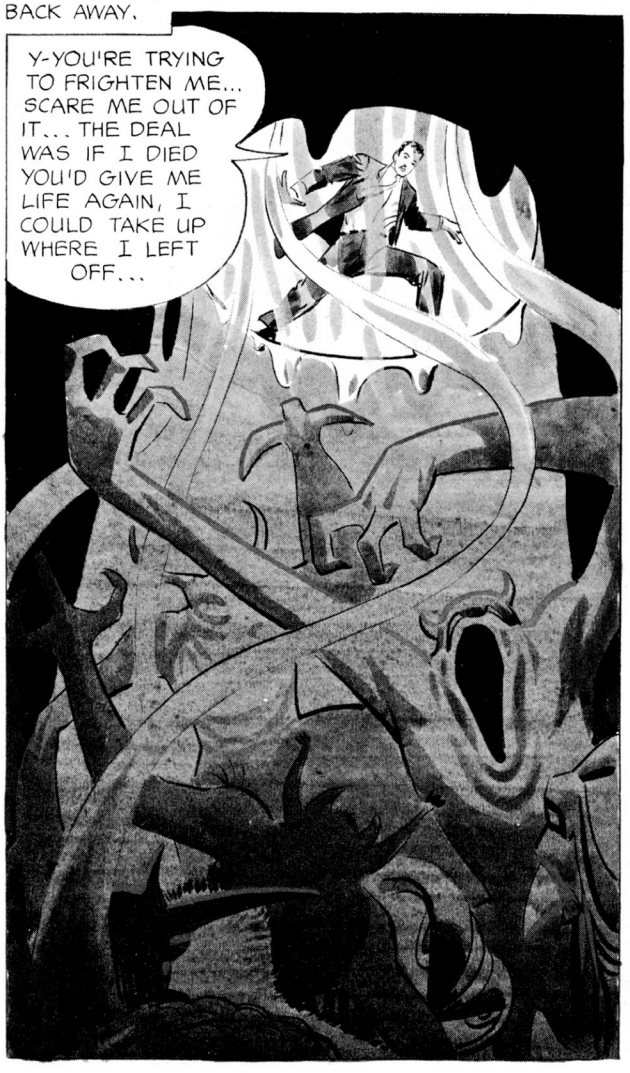
SECOND CHANCE!

FOR A TIME AFTER HE DIED, EDWARD NUGENT DRIFTED IN A LIMBO WITHOUT DIMENSION, WITHOUT THOUGHT; LIKE A DREAMLESS SLUMBER... THEN, SENSATION WAKENED IN HIS FLOATING FORM AND HE FOUND HIMSELF DRAWN INTO A HALFWORLD OF HORROR, A SHIFTING, CHANGING NIGHTMARE THAT REACHED OUT AND ENGULFED HIM, AN AMOBEA UNIVERSE WRAPPING AROUND HIM, PULLING HIM TO ITS CORE...

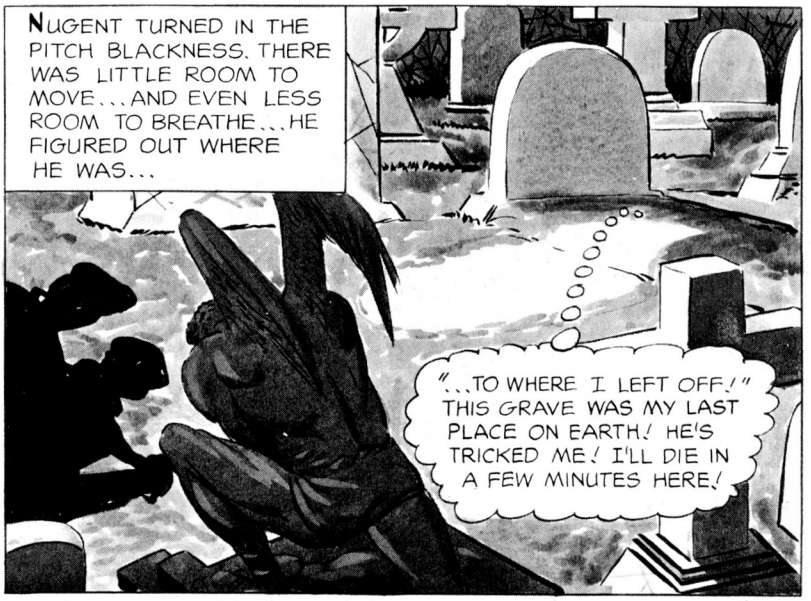
ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

DEEPER AND DEEPER EDWARD NUGENT PLUNGED INTO THE DARK DOMAIN, PLEADING AND BEGGING WITHIN HIMSELF FOR IT TO END... UNTIL, TO HIS SUDDEN REGRET, IT DID!
WHAT... OH, NO... NOOOO!
HE WAS LOCKED IN GRIPS ALIEN AND REPULSIVE, CARRIED BY THINGS SIRED FROM SEEDS OF MADNESS... CREATURES TO MAKE HIM WONDER IF DEAD MEN MIGHT GO MAD!
YOU ARE LATE, EDWARD NUGENT! HE WILL NOT BE KEPT WAITING!
LET ME GO! LET ME GO! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME!
THE IRON GRASPS, THE HIDEOUS CLUTCHINGS DID NOT LESSEN... NUGENT FELT THE URGE TO RAGE, TO STRUGGLE, TO BURST FREE OF THE UNSPEAKABLE GUARD THAT BORE HIM...
YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE! I SHOULDN'T BE TREATED LIKE THIS!
HIS PITIFUL SQUIRMING EFFORT WAS FUTILITY ITSELF, AND THE HOLDS TIGHTENED, UNTIL HE SCREAMED WITH THE PAIN OF IT... THEN, SUDDENLY, TOO SUDDENLY, HE WAS RELEASED...
DOWN! FLATTEN YOURSELF BEFORE THE MIGHTY ONE, BEFORE THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS, BEFORE GREAT BEELZEBUB!
NUGENT PRESSED CLOSE TO THE FIRMAMENT BENEATH HIM AS THOUGH IT MIGHT SWALLOW HIM AND HIDE HIM FROM THAT WHICH HE WAS AFRAID TO LIFT HIS HEAD TO SEE, A VOICE LIKE VELVET-WRAPPED THUNDER SPOKE HIS NAME...
NUGENT! I'VE WAITED SOME TIME FOR THIS...
B-BUT... I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD GO THIS FAR... DON'T YOU REMEMBER? WE MADE AN AGREEMENT... A PACT!

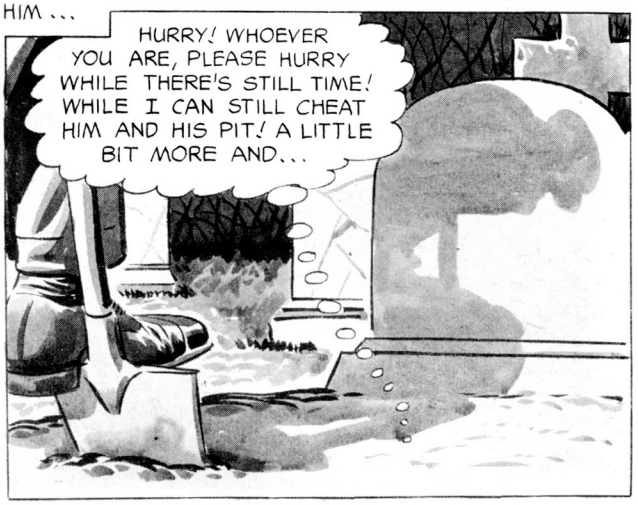
BEHIND HIM CAME A GREAT RUMBLE, AND NUGENT TURNED TO FIND HIMSELF TEETERING ON THE BRINK OF A HUGE PRECIPICE...ECHOING OUT OF THE DEPTHS CAME TORTURED CRIES OF THE DOUBLY DAMNED AND BARELY DISCERNABLE TO THE EYE WERE QUIVERING NAMELESS...THINGS...UNCONSCIOUSLY, HE BEGAN TO BACK AWAY.



ONCE AGAIN, EDWARD NUGENT FOUND HIMSELF FLOATING, WHIRLING, FASTER AND FASTER, BEING HEAVED UP BY THE TERRIBLE DARK WORLD THAT HAD SWALLOWED HIM...



THEN, FAR ABOVE HIM, IN THE WORLD OF THE LIVING, NUGENT HEARD SOUNDS...THE SOUNDS OF LABORING, OF METAL DIGGING INTO EARTH...CHIPPING AWAY AT THE BLANKET OF SOIL THAT WAS SLOWLY SMOTHERING HIM...

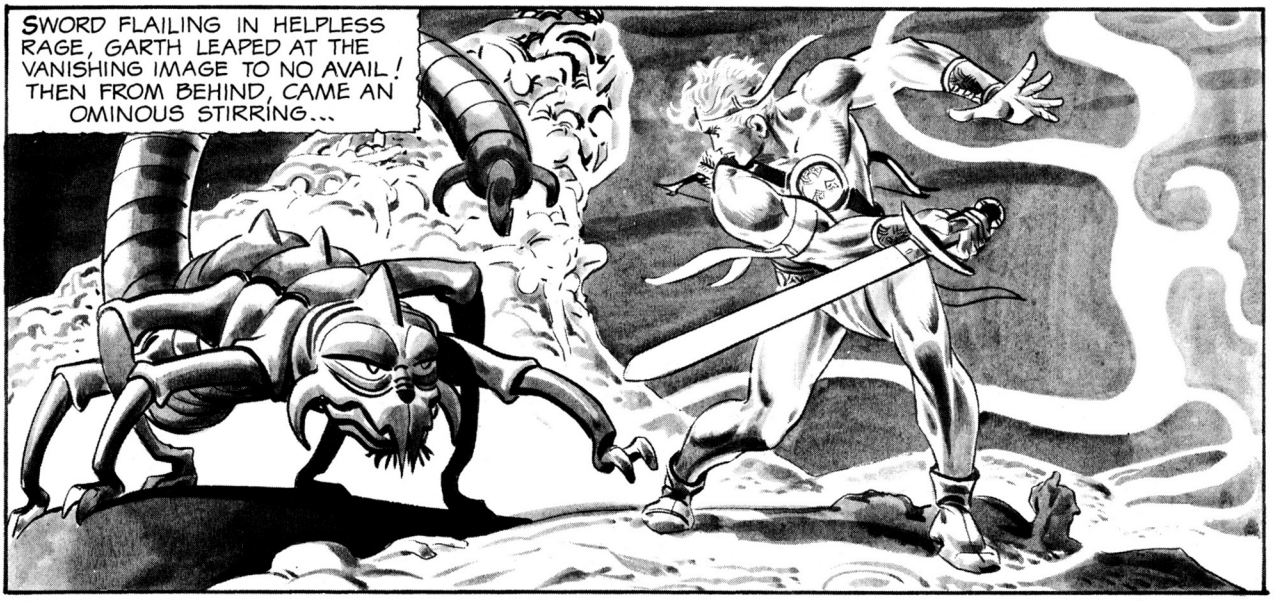


EPILOGUE: IN THE SOFTEST LIGHTS, MADNESS IS HARSH; BY THE FLASHLIGHTS BEAM, IT IS ALL BUT CONTAGIOUS. BOTH POLICEMEN SHIVER AS THE BREEZE CATCHES THE INSANE GIGGLING AND FLINGS IT TO THE FAR CORNERS OF THE CEMETERY...

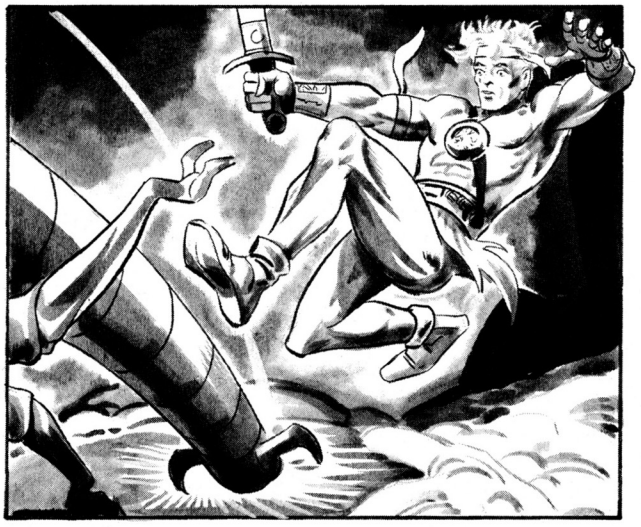
FOOTSTEP AFTER FOOTSTEP IS TRACED BACK, UNTIL...

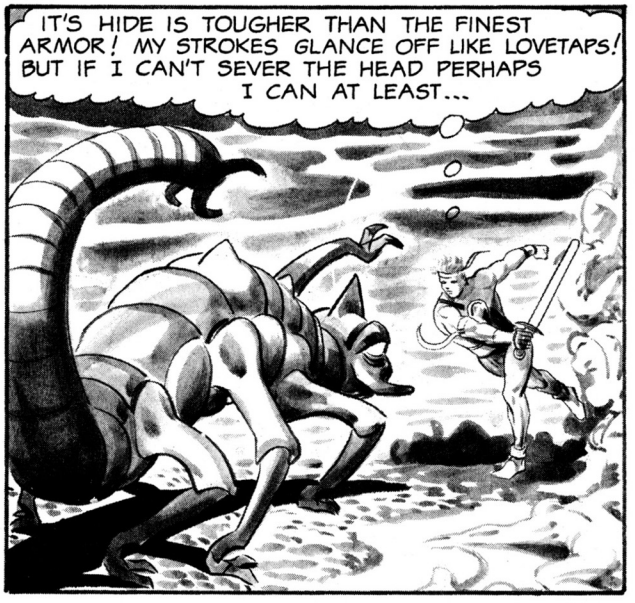
ART BY STEVE DITKO SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

...THIS!!
HA HA HA HA HA!
YOU SLASH AT AIR, WARRIOR! A MERE PROJECTION OF MY BEING... WHAT GOOD YOUR MIGHT AND PROWESS AGAINST SUCH SKILLS AS THESE?!
FACE ME IN THE FLESH, SALAMAND, I'LL HAVE YOUR BLACK HEART ON MY SWORD!
THERE IS WHERE YOU'LL FIND ME, GARTH... I AWAIT YOUR PUNY ASSAULT!
...AND I DO NOT WAIT ALONE. NOT ALL OF YOUR VILLAGE WERE DESTROYED...
AT THE CONJURER'S GLOATING WORDS, THE SHIMMERING IMAGE HE PRESENTED BROADENED, AND TO GARTH'S HORROR HE SAW...
TANYA! MY BETROTHED... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HER! SHE SITS AS ONE TURNED TO STONE!
A SIMPLE TRANCE... MY WILL HOLDS HER FAST! THE FIRST OF MANY PUNISHMENTS FOR DARING TO PREFER A BABARIAN LIKE YOURSELF OVER ME!
YOU'LL DIE FOR THIS, WIZARD! IF I HAVE TO RIP DOWN YOUR MOUNTAIN FORTRESS WITH MY BARE HANDS...
HER BAD JUDGEMENT BROUGHT MY WRATH ON YOUR VILLAGE, GARTH... PLUNGE ON AND IT DESCENDS FULL FORCE ON YOU!

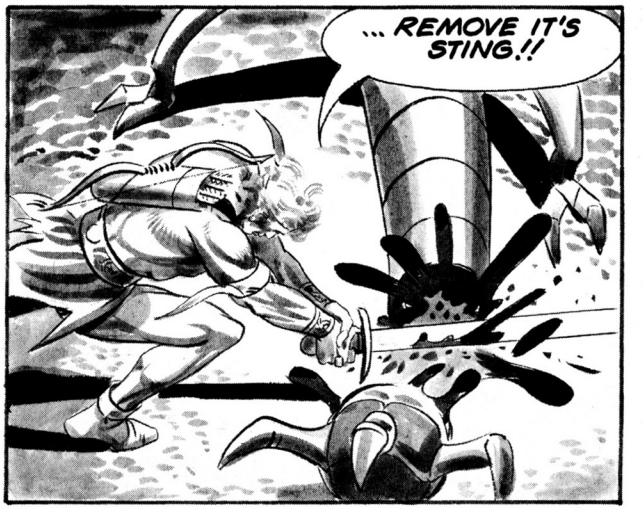


...AND ALL THE AGILITY IN HIS SEASONED WARRIOR'S BODY WAS SORELY TESTED BY THE VENOMOUS WHIPLASH SWIRLING ABOUT HIM!





HARD PRESSED, GARTH SIDE-STEPPED THE ATTACKING MONSTER AND SWUNG WITH ALL HIS MIGHT TO MEET THE THRASHING TAIL, GAMBLING TO STRIKE A JOINT...



SWORD DRIPPING BLOOD AND VENOM, GARTH WAVED IT IN THE MISTY AIR ABOUT HIM...

IMPUDENT SAVAGE! HIS BRAIN IS IN HIS SWORD ARM! PRESS ON, FOOL... YOU'VE HAD BUT A TASTE OF SALAMAND'S WIZARDRY!
YOU MARCH TOO QUICKLY, TOO CARELESSLY, GARTH... A STIRRING OF THESE WATERS WILL SHOW YOU THE ERROR OF SUCH RASHNESS...
CURSE SALAMAND AND HIS LAND! THE VERY ATMOSPHERE HANGS HEAVY WITH EVIL... THE FOG ENVELOPES LIKE A CLOAK OF WOOL! IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL WHERE THE NEXT STEP...
...LEADS!!
THE EARTH DISAPPEARED BENEATH HIM AND GARTH PLUNGED INTO SEEMINGLY BOTTOMLESS SPACE, LASHING OUT WITH ONE LAST DESPERATE MOVEMENT BEFORE A PLUNGE TO OBLIVION...
IT'S THE ONLY CHANCE! MY LIFE'S TIED TO THE STRENGTH OF THE BOWSTRING!

THE DOWNWARD PLUNGE CEASED WITH A JOLT THAT WOULD HAVE RIPPED OUT THE TENDONS IN A LESSER ARM! GARTH SWAYED ABOVE THE ABYSS, CLUTCHING THE BOW THAT NOW WAS HIS LIFE-LINE IN A GRIP OF STEEL...
IT HOLDS! COULD ANY WEAPON SERVE A MAN BETTER?!
HE CLIMBS UP FROM THE VERY BRINK OF DESTRUCTION! I'LL TOY NO MORE! LET GARTH FACE THE WINGED GUARDIAN OF SALAMAND'S STRONGHOLD!
CHEST HEAVING, MUSCLES ACHING, GARTH PAUSED IN HIS ASSAULT, WHEN THE WIND BROUGHT TERRIBLE SOUNDS TO MAKE EVERY NERVE ENDING TINGLE... THE LOW MOANING WAIL OF A DIVING OBJECT AND THE LEATHERY BEAT OF UNEARTHLY WINGS!
SALAMAND HURLS HIS GENERAL TO THE FIELD! THE SAME GRIM REAPER THAT HARVESTED DEATH TO MY VILLAGE!
BODILY HURT WAS SUBMERGED AS GARTH BECAME A MACHINE OF COMBAT, SENDING SHAFT AFTER SHAFT SKYWARD TO THE ON-RUSHING HORROR!
HELL'S OWN MONSTER! IF I DO NOTHING ELSE, LET ME LIVE TO SLAY YOU!
THE ARROWS ARE BUT PINPRICKS... I CANNOT STOP IT'S CHARGE!!

FOR THE SECOND TIME THE DEADLY AXE BLADE SLICED PAST GARTH, SO CLOSE AS TO SEND HAIR ON THE BACK OF HIS HEAD FLYING, AS WITH A WILD CRY, ***HE LEAPED...***

THE WINGED MONSTER SHOT WILDLY THROUGH THE AIR, IT'S UGLY HEAD TURNED TO BITE AT THE UNWELCOMED RIDER, WHOSE FREE HAND THRUST FLASHING STEEL AT THE SCALY NECK...

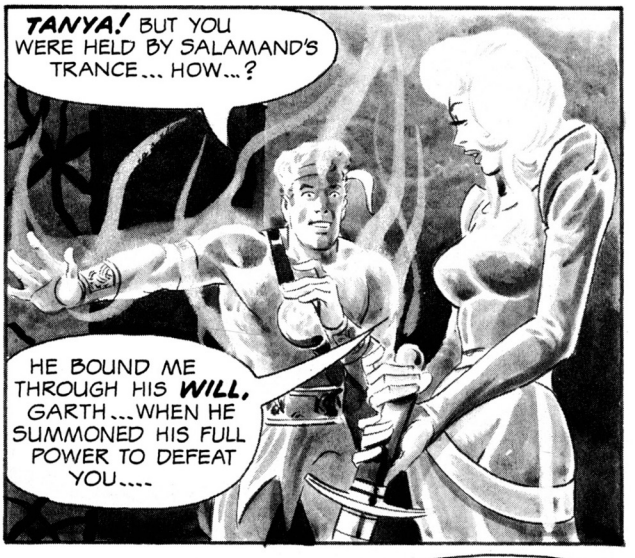
BLACK BLOOD SPURTED AS THE SWORD WENT HOME AND WITH AN EAR-SHATTERING SCREECH, THE CREATURE PLUMMETED DOWNWARD...

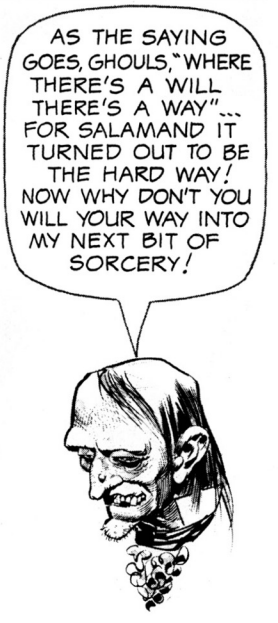
PUSHING HIS RESERVE OF STRENGTH TO IT'S VERY LIMIT, GARTH LEAPED FORWARD AS THE SKELETAL MAS-TER OF THE DEATH STEED BEGAN TO RISE...

SALAMAND! YOUR OWN EVIL HAS DELIVERED ME TO YOUR DOORSTEP... NOW WILL YOU FACE ME?!
WITH LIMBS THAT SCREAMED TO COLLAPSE, GARTH PUSHED ON, DRUNK ON THE NEED FOR VENGEANCE.....
SORCERER! I'M HERE TO KILL YOU, SORCERER... SHOW YOURSELF!
GARTH STUMBLED INTO THE WIZARD'S INNER-CHAMBER TO A NUMBING SIGHT.....
TANYA! HER FACE HAS THE PALLOR OF DEATH... HER BROW LIKE ICE...THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING I CAN DO!
YOU'VE ALREADY DONE ENOUGH, GARTH... IN FACT, YOU'VE DONE EXACTLY AS I PLANNED!
SALAMAND!
YOU'VE EXHAUSTED YOURSELF FIGHTING MY TRAPS...NOW YOU'LL SERVE MY PURPOSE! MY TRANCE BINDS TANYA'S BODY BUT I CAN'T GAIN HER LOVE... IT'S TOO STRONG FOR YOU!
YOUR DEATH WOULD ONLY HAVE MADE HER FEELINGS STRONGER.
...NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE, SO CLOSE, I CAN TURN THIS TO MY ADVANTAGE...
...BY ASSUMING YOUR SOUL!

DARKNESS SURROUNDED GARTH AND HE FELT HIMSELF SINKING INTO OBLIVION...AS THOUGH HIS VERY ESSENCE WAS BEING TORN FROM HIS BODY...WHEN...

LIFE SEEMED TO FLOOD BACK INTO HIS WEAKENED BODY, HIS BLURRED VISION SLOWLY CLEARED...



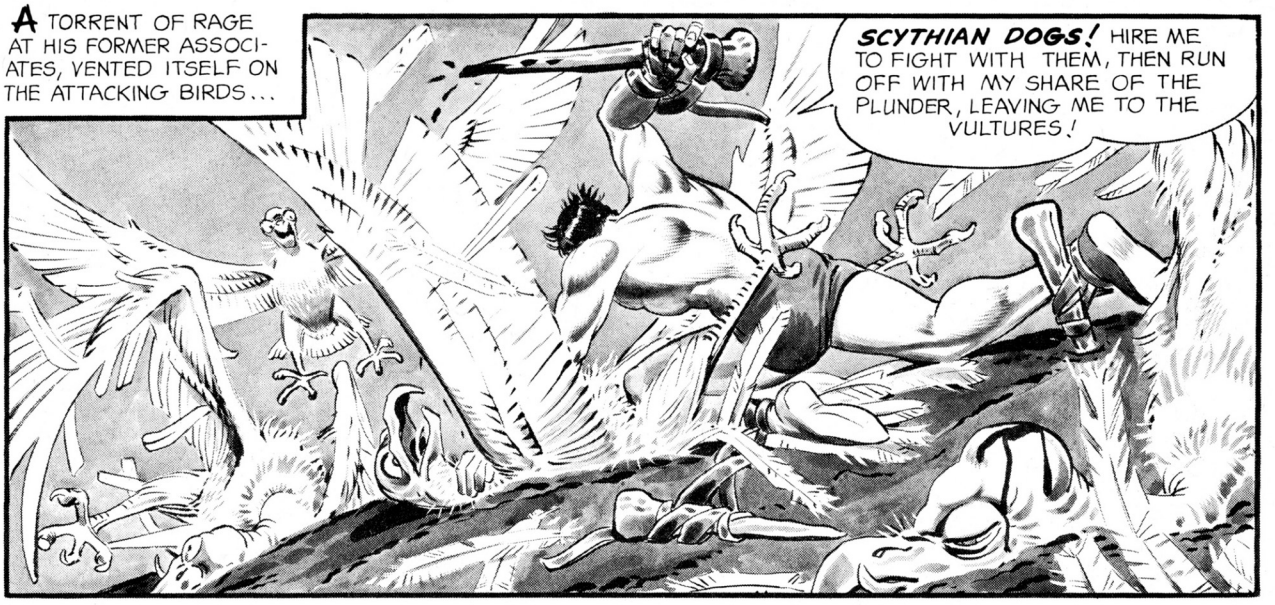


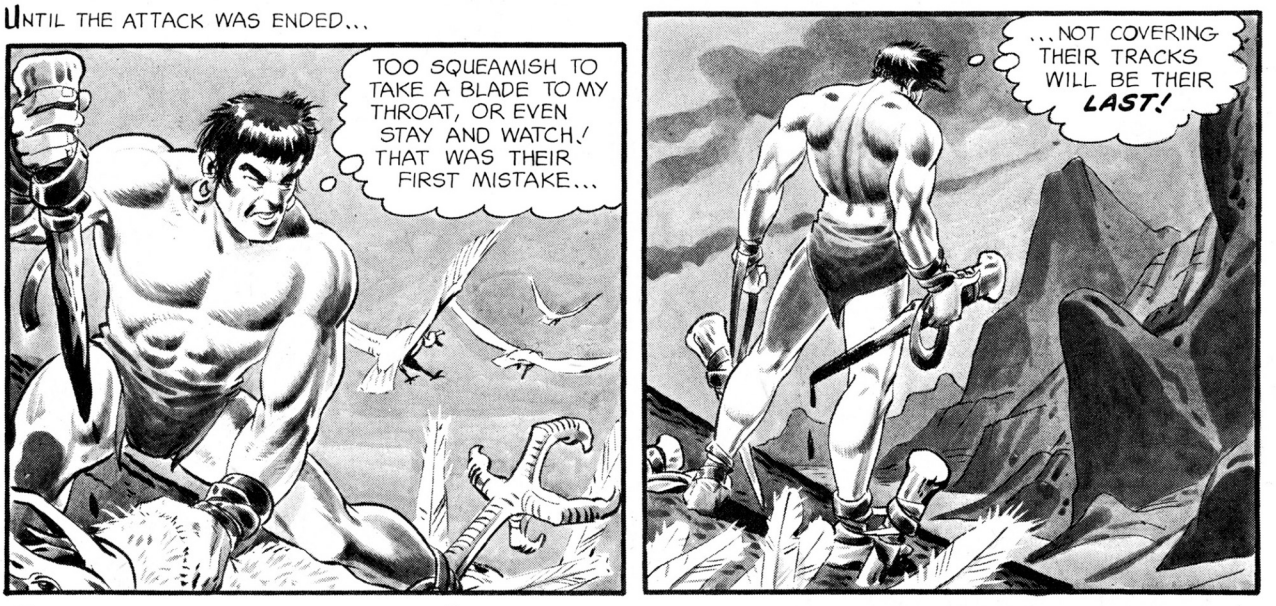
READY FOR SOME FIENDISH FANTASY, FANATICS? BACK WE GO TO A DARK AGE BEYOND RECORDED HISTORY WHERE EMERGING CIVILIZATION MINGLES WITH SORCERY AND HORROR, AND THE ONLY THING A MAN CAN COUNT ON IS HIS SWORD... AS YOU'LL SEE WHEN WE VISIT THE...

CITY OF DOOM!

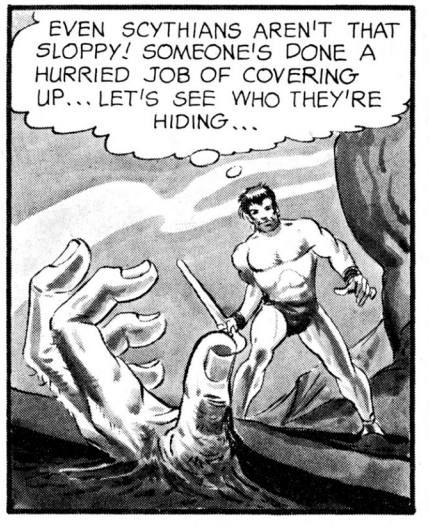
THEY HAD LEFT THANE STAKED OUT TO DIE ON THE BLACK SAND OF THE VOLCANIC WASTELAND, BAIT FOR THE BEAKS AND TALONS OF THE GREAT ALBINO VULTURES WHICH HUNT THERE... FORGETTING THAT STAKE AND THONG ARE A POOR MATCH FOR BARBARIAN TEMPER AND STRENGTH, WARRIOR WILL AND DETERMINATION...

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN


A TORRENT OF RAGE AT HIS FORMER ASSOCIATES, VENTED ITSELF ON THE ATTACKING BIRDS...
SCYTHIAN DOGS! HIRE ME TO FIGHT WITH THEM, THEN RUN OFF WITH MY SHARE OF THE PLUNDER, LEAVING ME TO THE VULTURES!


UNTIL THE ATTACK WAS ENDED...
TOO SQUEAMISH TO TAKE A BLADE TO MY THROAT, OR EVEN STAY AND WATCH! THAT WAS THEIR FIRST MISTAKE...
...NOT COVERING THEIR TRACKS WILL BE THEIR LAST!

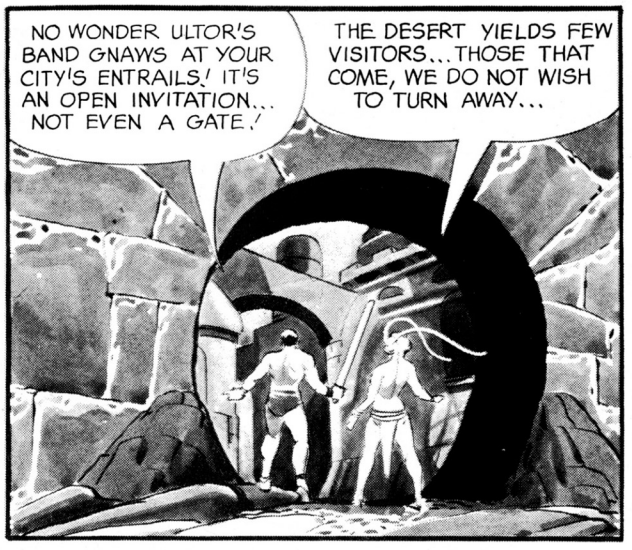
JOGGING AT A STEADY PACE, THANE STRUCK OUT ACROSS THE ROLLING HILLS AND GULLEYS OF ASHEN BARRENESS, CONFIDENT OF CATCHING THE SCYTHIAN PARTY BEFORE NIGHTFALL...
TRAIL ENDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS RAVINE...DID ULTOR'S LADS SUDDENLY GET SMART OR---


THE BARBARIAN'S HARD GREY EYES DARTED TO AN OBJECT THRUSTING OUT OF THE DARK SAND...
EVEN SCYTHIANS AREN'T THAT SLOPPY! SOMEONE'S DONE A HURRIED JOB OF COVERING UP... LET'S SEE WHO THEY'RE HIDING...

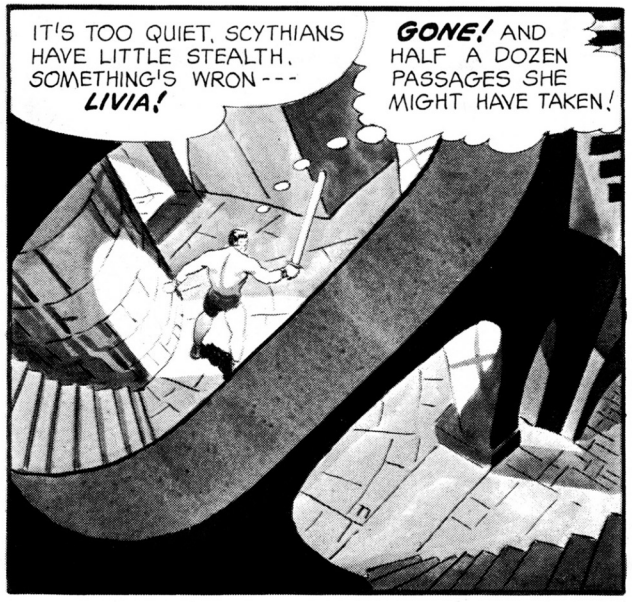
THANE GRIPPED THE COLD STIFF FINGERS AND PULLED HARD, EXPECTING TO UNEARTH THE BODY BELOW...
BY THOTH!

THANE KICKED AT THE SAND, ENLARGING THE HOLE WHERE HE'D REMOVED HIS GRUESOME DISCOVERY...
SCYTHIAN HELMET, BLOODSTAINS ON IT... REST IS BARE BONES... SOMETHING ATTACKED HIM, DIDN'T QUITE GET TO FINISH THE JOB!
HE DUG FURTHER, WIDENING THE AREA...
FIRST THE HELMET, NOW THIS... WHAT KIND OF ANIMAL FEASTS ON A MAN THEN BURIES HIS BONES AND EQUIPMENT?!
HELP! HELP ME PLEASE!
THE BARBARIAN WHIRLED AS A LITHE FIGURE SCRAMBLED DOWN THE RAVINE WALL TOWARD HIM...
THEY'RE RAVAGING OUR CITY! SCYTHIAN RAIDERS! KILLING ...PLUNDERING... YOU MUST HELP!
CITY? IN THIS BLACK DESERT, A CITY?
I'VE BUSINESS WITH CERTAIN SCYTHIANS... ARE THEY A SMALL BAND? LEAD BY A MAN WITH AN EYE PATCH?
THE VERY SAME! OUR CITY IS ANCIENT, SPARSELY POPULATED, INADEQUATELY DEFENDED ...THEY ENTERED PEACEFULLY, THEN STRUCK! COME WITH ME, PLEASE!
AN ITCH FOR REVENGE TEASED THANE'S SWORD ARM... HE FOLLOWED THE GIRL OUT OF THE RAVINE, AND OVER A RISE OF BLACK ASHEN SAND...
HERE IS ANCIENT KADITH! I AM LIVIA, HIGH PRIESTESS THERE...
ULTOR'S A TREACHEROUS DOG, BUT HE HAS A NOSE FOR PLUNDER... WITH LUCK, I CAN PARLAY VENGEANCE INTO A PROFITABLE VENTURE!

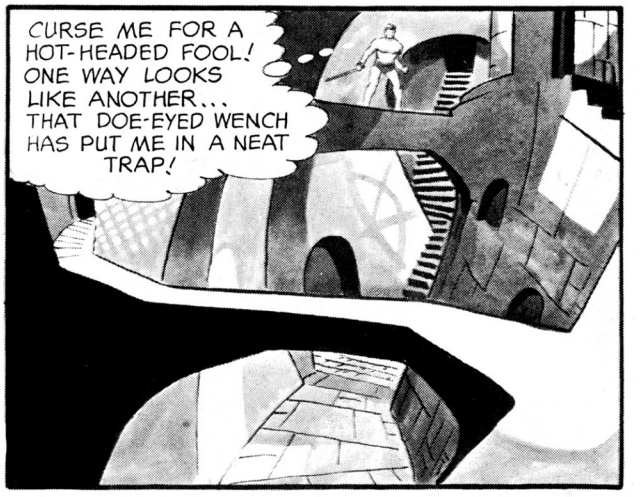
CAUTIOUSLY THEY ADVANCED TO THE SPRAWLING STRUCTURE RISING OUT OF THE DARK WASTELAND...



LIVIA LEAD THANE FORWARD...THE STREETS WERE NARROW, TWISTING AND CURVING THROUGH ARCHES AND PASSAGEWAYS IN A CONTINUOUS FLOW...



SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE WAS A SHUFFLING OR RUNNING. THANE PLUNGED THROUGH THE NEAREST ARCH TO THE SOUND, RACING ALONG WINDING STREETS AND LINKING CORRIDORS...

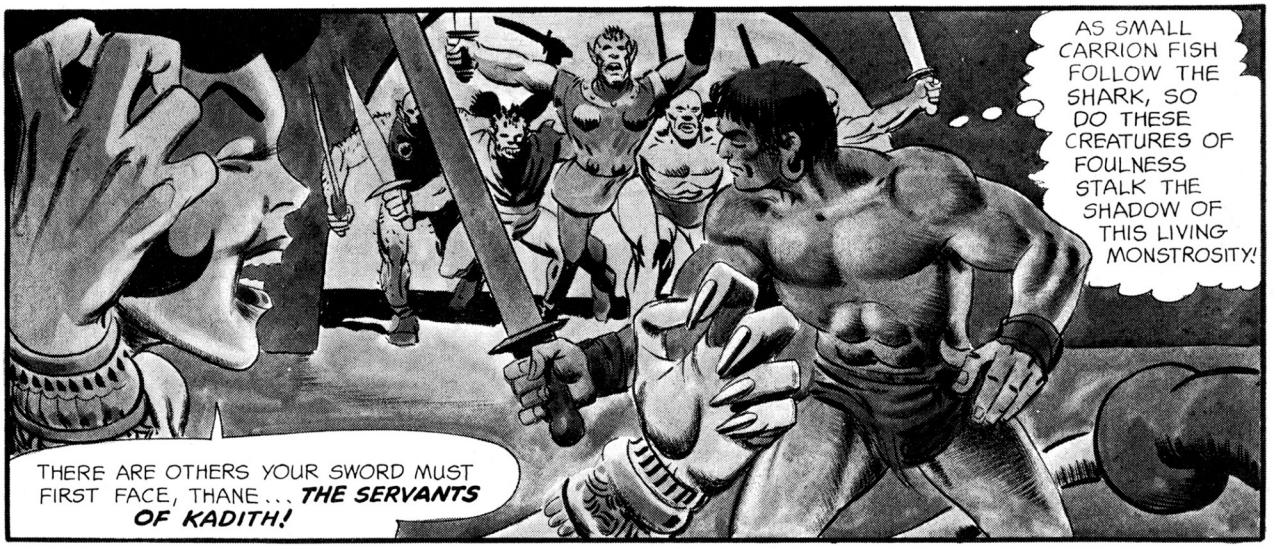


EVERY NERVE TINGLING, THANE CREPT ALONG THE WINDING PASSAGE...

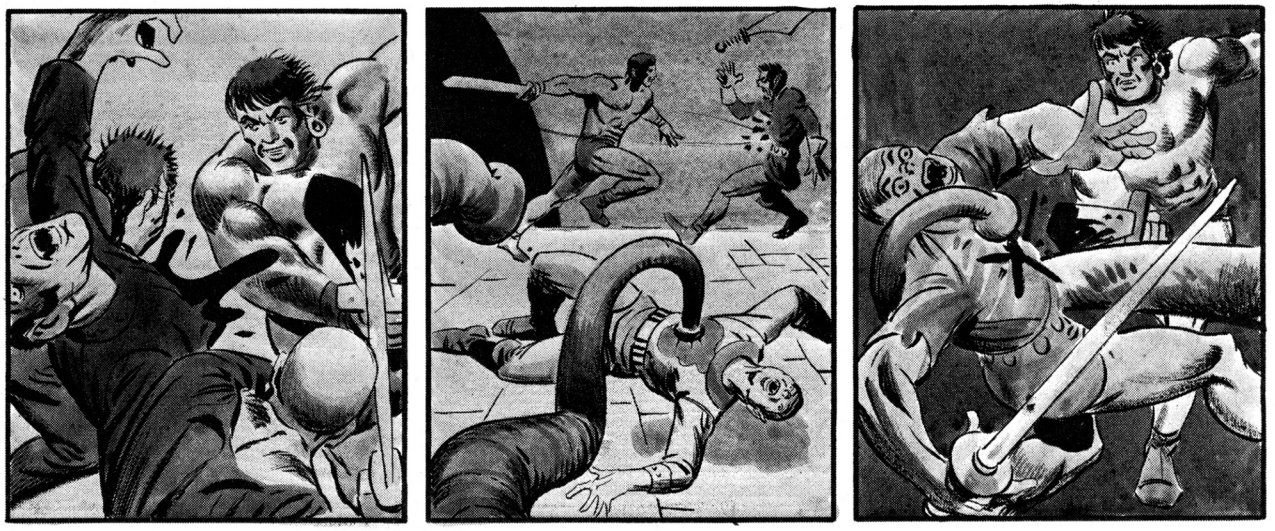
DROOLING AND GRUNTING WITH A FERVOR MORE OF ANIMALS THAN MEN, THE WILD-EYED HORDE SWEPT FORWARD... INTO A WHIRLWIND OF FLASHING STEEL CREATED BY THE GIANT BARBARIAN!
I KNOW THOSE SHARP TEETH AND THE STENCH OF DEATH UPON THEM! THESE MIGHT ONCE HAVE BEEN MEN, BUT NOW THEY'RE FEASTERS ON FLESH!
THE GHOULISH ATTACKERS SWARMED AROUND HIM! UNABLE TO DRAW BACK, THANE CHARGED FORWARD HEWING A SWATH THROUGH THEIR MIDST, UNTIL HE COULD RUN FREELY DOWN THE LARGE DARK PASSAGE FROM WHICH THEY HAD COME, LEAVING ENOUGH DEAD OR WOUNDED TO HAMPER IMMEDIATE PURSUIT!
THANE HAD ENTERED A LARGE CAVERNOUS CHAMBER. HE INCHED FORWARD, WAITING FOR HIS EYES TO GROW ACCUSTOMED TO THE SURROUNDING BLACKNESS...
I CAME ACROSS NOTHING LIKE THIS IN MY WANDERINGS AMONG THE OTHER CORRIDORS...IT MUST BE THE VERY HEART OF THE CITY...
UHHHHH! SLAY ME! FOR THOTH'S SAKE...WHOEVER YOU ARE... KILL ME! PUT AN END TO IT...

I KNOW THAT VOICE... THAT GUTTURAL WHINE! ULTOR! I FEARED THE GHOULISH CITIZENS OF KADITH HAD ROBBED ME OF THIS MOMENT... THAT YOU MIGHT BE DEAD...
THANE! YOU BARBARIAN SCUM... I WISH I WERE! TAKE YOUR REVENGE... QUICKLY! KILL ME!
IN GOOD TIME, ULTOR, OLD COMRADE... FIRST TELL ME OF THE PLUNDER! WHERE IS IT? WHAT HAVE THEY DONE WITH IT?
FORGET THE PLUNDER, YOU FOOL! MAKE AN END TO ME! YOU'VE LITTLE ENOUGH TIME TILL YOU WIND UP SAME AS ME!
TORCHLIGHT SUDDENLY ILLUMINATED THE CHAMBER, AND EVEN THANE'S HARDENED WARRIOR'S MIND REELED AT THE VISION BEFORE HIM, OF THE LEECHLIKE MASS OF WRITHING FLESH SUCKLING AT THE SHRIEKING SCYTHIAN'S LIFEBLOOD, AS LIVIA'S VOICE ECHOED ABOUT HIM...
HE SPEAKS TRUE, MY BRAVE BARBARIAN! YOU'RE TRAPPED HERE EVEN AS I LEAD HIS BAND INTO AMBUSH IN THE RAVINE! WHEN HIS BLOOD EBBS, YOURS SHALL REPLACE IT!
ULTOR'S CARCASS SHALL BE A FEAST FOR THE SERVANTS OF KADITH! AS WAS HIS MENS', AS WILL YOURS! AND YOUR BLOOD WILL FEED THE LIVING ALTAR, THE MIGHTY HEART...
UNTIL IT COURSES THROUGH THE VERY WALLS OF AROUND US, AS HAS THE BLOOD OF OTHERS FOR CENTURIES!
...NOURISHING THE VERY STRUCTURE OF KADITH... MIGHTY KADITH, WHOSE WALLS ARE FLESH! MIGHTY KADITH, THE LIVING CITY!
DEMON PRIESTESS! A STROKE FOR ULTOR, AND THE NEXT FOR YOU!

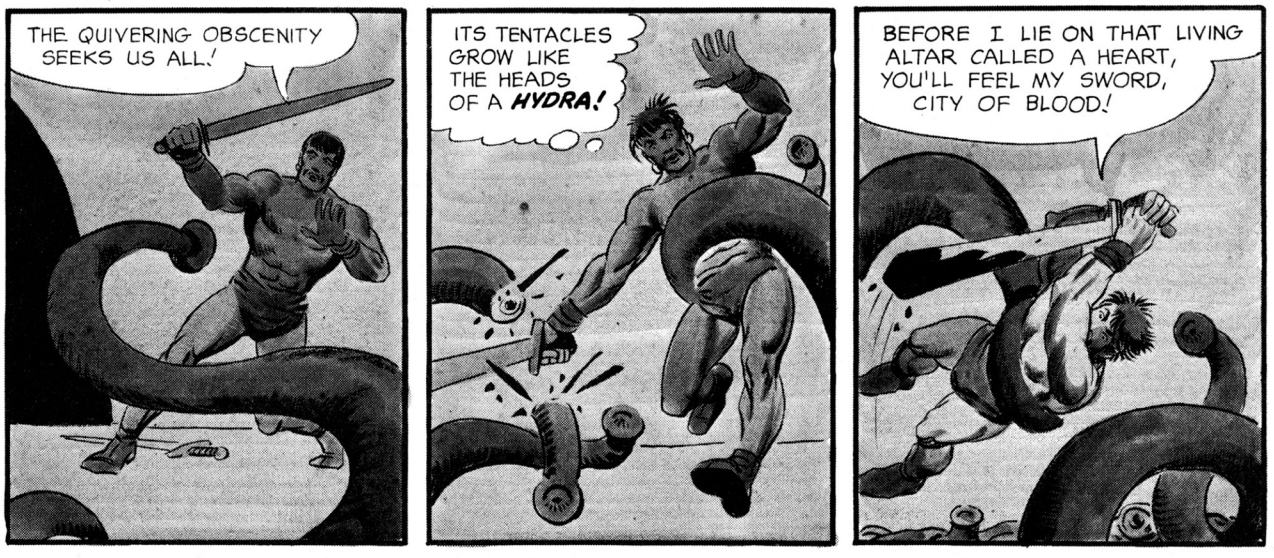
ULTOR MOANED AS DEATH MERCIFULLY CLAIMED HIM, AND SUDDENLY THE CHAMBER WAS PLUNGED INTO BLACKNESS BEFORE THANE COULD CHARGE THE MOCKING PRIESTESS...



ALL THOUGHTS VANISHED, AND IN THE DARKNESS, THANE BECAME A KILLING MACHINE! BLOOD FLOWED FREELY AND THE EVER THIRSTING TENTACLES OF KADITH'S HEART SNAKED THROUGH THE CHAMBER FALLING ON WOUNDED AND DEAD...

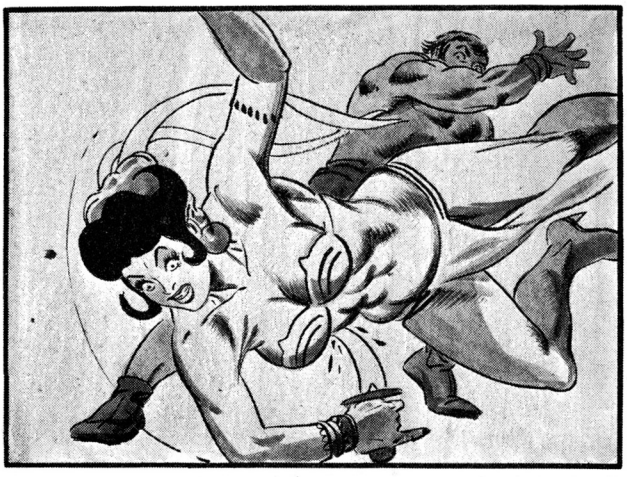


AN ORGY OF BLOODLUST DROVE THE GREAT LIVING ENTITY THAT WAS KADITH MAD! ANY TOUCHED BY BLOOD PERISHED, AND ANY IN THE SWORDPLAY WERE TOUCHED!



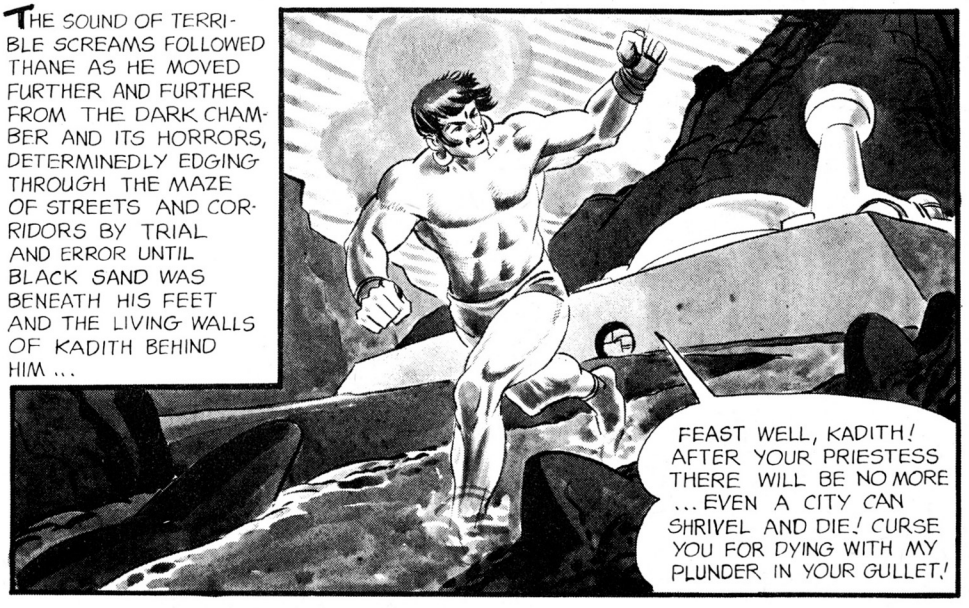
A CONVULSIVE SHUDDER SHOOK THE VERY WALLS OF THE CHAMBER, THE TENTACLE STIFFENED, AND THANE WAS WRENCHED AWAY FROM THE DEEP BURIED SWORD, SENT TUMBLING INTO THE DARK...

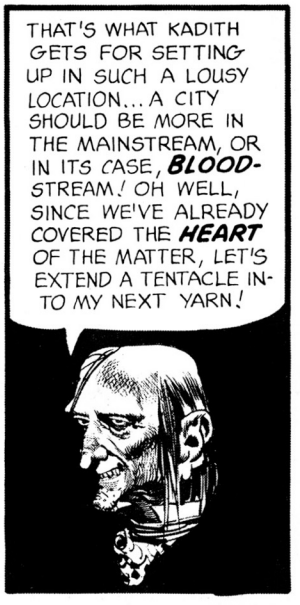
AS THE FLASHING BLADE SLICED DOWNWARD, THANE TURNED TO THE SIDE, AND THE PRIESTESS OF KADITH FELL FORWARD, CARRIED BY THE VIOLENCE OF HER OWN MOVEMENT TOWARD THE GLEAMING DAGGER POINT NOW TWISTED IN HER HAND...



THANE LEAPED FOR THE CURVED ENTRANCE TO THE CHAMBER, ALLOWING HIMSELF ONE QUICK GLANCE BACKWARD WHERE THE RECOVERING HEART ONCE MORE SENT SLITHERING FEELERS TOWARD FRESH BLOOD...

THE SOUND OF TERRIBLE SCREAMS FOLLOWED THANE AS HE MOVED FURTHER AND FURTHER FROM THE DARK CHAMBER AND ITS HORRORS, DETERMINEDLY EDGING THROUGH THE MAZE OF STREETS AND CORRIDORS BY TRIAL AND ERROR UNTIL BLACK SAND WAS BENEATH HIS FEET AND THE LIVING WALLS OF KADITH BEHIND HIM...





ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY CLARK DIMOND & TERRY BISSON

TOM! LOOK! TH-THAT WASN'T THERE A MOMENT AGO...
NO! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE...THE SAME EXACT THING AS I'VE DRAWN! BUT... BUT IF THE ROCK'S THERE, THEN...
DISBELIEF TURNS TO HORROR AS THEY TURN TO SEE...
GOOD LORD! IT'S...WHAT HAVE I DONE?!

TOM! HELP!
THE FALL SLOWS THE MONSTER LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE THE TERRIFIED COUPLE A FEW PRECIOUS SECONDS...
TOM! IF YOUR DRAWING CREATED THIS *THING*, THEN YOU CAN *ERASE* IT!
I'M *TRYING*, SWEETHEART... IT'S NO USE! I DREW HIM IN *INK!*
THE ROCK! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!
IT'S TOO *STEEP!*
GOT TO DO *SOMETHING...* ANYTHING!

IF I CAN DRAW FAST ENOUGH, WE CAN STOP HIM!
GRIPPED BY SWEAT-DRENCHED FINGERS, TOM'S PEN FRANTICALLY PUSHES ACROSS THE PAPER IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO HALT THE ON-RUSHING HORROR ...
HURRY, TOM! PLEASE!
OH, MY GOD! THE PEN... OUT OF INK!
HE'LL KILL US, TOM! DO SOMETHING!
FLOODED WITH FEAR AND HELPLESS FRUSTRATION, TOM STABS WITH THE USELESS PEN, VIOLENTLY RIPPING AT THE PAD BEFORE HIM...

THAT'S IT! KEEP STABBING HIM!
MAIMED, GORED, THE INCREDIBLE THING CONTINUED TO LURCH FORWARD, SEEMINGLY UNSTOPPABLE...
IT--IT'S NO USE!
GIVE ME THAT PAD AND I'LL...
CRUSH HIM!
LORD! IT'S JUST LIKE THE DRAWING MUST BE...CRUMPLED, DISTORTED...

AND MORE ENRAGED, MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER!
AND NOW WE'RE CORNERED!
THE ROCK REACTED THE SAME WAY! IT'S CHANGED ENOUGH SO THAT WE CAN CLIMB!
WE'RE SAFE AT LAST! HE CAN'T GET UP!
BUT WE CAN'T GET AWAY EITHER. NOT WHILE HE'S THERE.
WAIT HERE. I THINK I CAN STOP HIM IF I WORK FAST ENOUGH, BUT I CAN ONLY DO THIS ALONE. YOU KEEP HIS ATTENTION HERE AS LONG AS YOU CAN.

IF I CAN JUST START THE BIKE...
THIS WILL DO FOR A FUSE. IF MY LIGHTER DOESN'T WORK, WE'RE DONE FOR.!

LOOKS LIKE MY YAMAHA COCKTAIL WORKED, HONEY. WAIT THERE, I'LL HELP YOU DOWN!
AS HE WALKS TO THE ROCK, TOM SEES THE FAMILIAR PIECE OF PAPER...
THIS! IT STARTED EVERYTHING... PUT US THROUGH ALL THIS HORROR...
I'LL WIPE THE ENTIRE ABOMINATION FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH!
BUT...BUT IF BURNING THE PAPER DESTROYS HIM, THEN..., OH, MY GOD!
EEEEEEEEEE
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU IGNORE INDIAN TABOOS...UNLESS TOM DRAWS ON HIS RESOURCES VERY QUICKLY, I'M AFRAID JULIE'S GOING TO BE BURNED UP ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR.

THE
EERIE
STORIES

ART BY STEVE DITKO/ SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

LOOK... I'M SOAKING WET, MY CAR'S BROKEN DOWN, AND I'M DEAD TIRED! HOW 'BOUT THAT ROOM...
SOMETHIN'S STRANGE ABOUT IT... FOLKS ARE NEVER HAPPY STAYIN' THERE!
SKIP THE LOCAL COLOR... JUST GIVE ME THE KEY!
JUST SO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GETTIN' INTO...
WHAT IS IT? ROOM 13... SOMETHING STUPID LIKE THAT?
NO... NOBODY'S REALLY EVER SAID... FOLKS JUST DON'T LIKE IT, THAT'S ALL!
WELL... HERE YOU ARE... ROOM 22!
LOOKS ALRIGHT... NOT THE HILTON, BUT AT LEAST IT'S CLEAN!
G'NIGHT, MISTER...

AN AIRSHAFT... SOME VIEW! NO WONDER NO ONE'D STAY HERE!
OH, WELL... JUST ONE NIGHT! BETTER GET SOME SHUT-EYE...
AAAAHHH!
WHO THE---
EMPTY! NOT A SOUL ANYWHERE...
HEY! DON'T TELL ME I'M LETTING THAT CLERK'S OLD WIVES' TALES GET TO ME...
JUST NERVES... I'M EXHAUSTED... BETTER HIT THE SACK...

YET EACH TIME DEXTER CLOSED HIS EYES, HE COULD STILL SEE THE EVIL FACE AND CHILLING STARE OF THE MIRROR REFLECTION...
IT LOOKED SO REAL... BUT THERE WAS NOTHING BEHIND ME... BLAST IT! CAN'T SLEEP FOR THINKING ABOUT IT... AWW, WHAT'S THE USE...
... I'LL TAKE ANOTHER LOOK!
NOOOOOO!!
N-NOT HERE... N-NOTHING! JUST LIKE BEFORE!
NOT ANOTHER MINUTE ... I'M NOT STAYING HERE!
FRONT DESK, ANYTHING WRONG, MR. DEXTER?
GOTTA GET HOLD OF MYSELF... I'LL SOUND LIKE A FOOL... CLERK'S CRAZY HINTS MADE MY IMAGINATION RUN WILD... THAT'S ALL... HAS TO BE...
N-NO... JUST WANTED TO LEAVE A CALL FOR ME AT EIGHT...

THE NIGHT CREPT ON BUT NO SLEEP CAME TO DEXTER... ONLY AGONIZING, TORTURED THOUGHTS...
MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE LEFT... HAS TO BE MY IMAGINATION... MIND PLAYING TRICKS... THOSE T-THINGS... SO REAL! TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE... WHAT IF THEY'RE IN THERE NOW... WATCHING... CAN'T BE... SILLY... WON'T...
I'VE GOT TO KNOW!
EEEEYAHHHHHH!!
NO MORE! I'LL PUT AN END TO THIS.... NOW!!

YAGHHH!!
NUMBER 22!
EMPTY!
NOT A SIGN OF HIM... MUSTA RUN OFF!
HMPH! YOU'D THINK HE COULD AT LEAST LEAVE THINGS THE WAY HE FOUND 'EM!
THE CLERK GASPED IN HORROR... THE ROOM HE STOOD IN MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABANDONED BY DEXTER, BUT THE ROOM IN THE MIRROR'S REFLECTION WAS... FULLY OCCUPIED!
DEXTER PICKED A HARD WAY TO SKIP OUT ON THE HOTEL BILL, BUT AT LEAST HE FINALLY GOT TO SLEEP ... PERMANENTLY! YOU MAY HAVE TROUBLE SLEEPING TOO, WHEN YOU READ MY NEXT LITTLE SCREAM STORY!

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

YOU'VE SEEN THE WHOLE LAYOUT NOW, COLBERT... IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE A FUNERAL TO ATTEND!
F-FUNERAL?
INMATE DIED. NO KIN. WE HAVE A POTTER'S FIELD JUST OFF THE GROUNDS... AS DIRECTOR, I HAVE TO BE THERE!
THEN, I'LL SPEND TIME WITH PATIENTS' RECORDS...
DR. COLBERT WAS YOUNG, EAGER AND DEDICATED.. A CASUAL CHECK DEVELOPED INTO A LATE NIGHT STUDY...
CAN'T FORGET ABOUT THAT PATIENT... NO NAME, NO BACKGROUND! PICKED UP ON A RAMPAGE ...CONFINED EVER SINCE... SHRIEKING AND SCREAMING!
IF ONLY I COULD DO SOMETHING... SURELY THE POSSIBILITIES AREN'T EXHAUSTED!
WHEW! I CAN USE A BREAK...
LORD! WHAT'S THAT?
SOMEONE'S PROWLING AROUND DOWN THERE!
DRIVING CURIOSITY HAD PUSHED COLBERT TOWARD SUCCESS AT A YOUNG AGE... IT OUTWEIGHED ANY OTHER EMOTION... EVEN FEAR!
WHOEVER IT WAS SEEMS TO BE GONE NOW... WHAT THE DEVIL WERE THEY DOING HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?

EARTH AROUND THIS ONE LOOKS FRESH... AS THOUGH SOMEONE MIGHT HAVE -- IDIOT! OF COURSE IT'S FRESH...THEY JUST BURIED A MAN TODAY!
SUPPRESSING A FEELING OF FOOLISHNESS, COLBERT TURNED IN THE CHILL NIGHT AIR AND STARTED BACK...
LOOKS LIKE A LIGHT AT MANDRELL'S PLACE...LONG AS HE'S UP, MAYBE I'LL CHECK WITH HIM...
A LIGHT FROST MADE THE GRASS CRUNCHED UNDERFOOT... NIGHT NOISES SEEMED TO HAVE CEASED...
GNYAHHHHHHH!
THEN...
THE UNDERBRUSH BECAME ALIVE WITH THE SNAPPING OF TWIGS AND BRANCHES... SOMETHING WAS RUSHING TOWARD COLBERT... WITH SPEED AND FRENZY!
AAGHHH!
COLBERT'S KNEES BUCKLED, HIS BODY SAGGED... THE SCREAMING HORROR FROM THE SHADOWS SLASHED AND CLAWED AT HIM LIKE SOME CRAZED ANIMAL... HE WAS GOING UNDER...

THROBBING ACHES AND PAINS DROVE COLBERT'S MIND BACK TO CONSCIOUSNESS...
YOU WERE APPARENTLY ATTACKED BY A GRAVEROBBER! THE CORPSE OF THE MAN WE BURIED YESTERDAY WAS FOUND LYING ON TOP OF ITS GRAVE...
JUST BEFORE I WAS ATTACKED... THERE WAS A HORRIBLE SHRIEK! FROM THE DIRECTION OF YOUR HOUSE... BASEMENT LIGHT WAS ON!
MY LABORATORY ...I WAS EXPERIMENTING. I HEARD NO SOUND...
SCREAM WAS AMAZINGLY SIMILAR TO THE POOR WRETCH WE'VE GOT... I'D LIKE TO RUN SOME TESTS... VARIOUS DRUGS ... PERHAPS...
COLBERT, I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL...TEN YEARS AGO UNDER THE OLD DIRECTOR, HUTCHINS, I FELT THE SAME WAY... BUT I KNOW BEST!
THAT MAN IS HOPELESS... BESTIAL! ANYTHING TO BE DONE FOR HIM, I HAVE TRIED! I WANT HIM LEFT ALONE, YOU UNDERSTAND? LEAVE HIM ALONE!
BUT COLBERT HAD THEORIES...
...THEORIES HE WOULD NOT LEAVE UNTESTED.
BIDING HIS TIME, HE WAITED...
UNTIL...
DR. MANDRELL ALWAYS GAVE STRICT ORDERS NOT TO MESS WITH THIS GUY! THAT'S A REAL WILD ANIMAL IN THERE...
MANDRELL'S IN TOWN TONIGHT...I'M IN CHARGE! GET THIS PATIENT UP TO MY LAB!

THE MANIAC WAS UNCONTROLLABLE... NEARLY AN HOUR HAD PASSED BEFORE THE MAN WAS STRAPPED DOWN IN THE LAB... HIS HORRENDOUS CRIES RINGING IN COLBERT'S EARS AS HE PREPARED THE INJECTION...
NO RECORD THAT MANDRELL EVER TRIED THE LSH-90... IT'S POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE... ALMOST STANDARD IN EXTREME CASES...
... WHY HASN'T HE USED IT? IF WE'RE EVER GOING TO KNOW, IT'LL BE... NOW!
THE WRITHING AND SCREAMING STOPPED... THE TORTURED FACE SOFTENED... THE WILD GLAZE OF THE EYES MOMENTARILY FADED...
MANDRELL! FOR GOD'S SAKE... DON'T! IT'S MURDER... IT'S--
IT'S WORKING! BUT WHAT...
THE MOMENT OF LUCIDITY FADED AS QUICKLY AS THE DRUG ITSELF ON THE RAGING, STRAINING HULK...
GNNYAAHHHHH
N-NO!
THE VIOLENT WAVE OF ANIMAL-MADNESS SURGED OVER COLBERT, DRAGGING HIM DOWN...
EEEEYAAAHHHH
... LEAVING A WAKE OF DESTRUCTION!
HE'S ESCAPED! LORD... WHAT HAVE I DONE! WHY DIDN'T I LISTEN TO MANDRELL...

ONE PAIN-WRACKED STEP AFTER THE OTHER, COLBERT WILLED HIS FEET ACROSS THE GROUND...
MAYBE HE'S BACK...
GOT TO WARN HIM... WHY'D HE HAVE TO GO INTO TOWN TONIGHT...
INSIDE, THE HOUSE WAS EMPTY AND SILENT... EXCEPT FOR A SLIGHT BUZZING IN THE BACK OF COLBERT'S MIND...
OBITUARIES... HE'S CIRCLED ONE... A MAN BURIED TODAY! HE WAS IN THE CEMETERY THAT NIGHT!
THE TRACE OF A SOUND CAME FROM THE BASEMENT... COLBERT STAGGERED DOWNWARD, SOMEHOW EXPECTING WHAT HE WAS TO FIND...
GHOUL! ARE THESE THE KIND OF EXPERIMENTS YOU CONDUCT?
COLBERT! YOU PRYING FOOL!
INFLICTING TORMENT ON THE DEAD...
YOU TOY WITH DRUGS TO FREE MINDS... I PERFECT A SERUM TO RESTORE LIFE! REANIMATE DEAD FLESH!
LIFE? YOU CALL THOSE SHRIEKING TORTURED THINGS LIFE? THEY WANT THE PEACE OF THE GRAVE! THEY FIGHT TO GET BACK TO IT! LIKE THAT FRENZIED SOUL IN THE PADDED CELL FOR 10 YEARS!
YOU MEAN HUTCHINS? MY FORMER SUPERIOR... MY STUPID EMPLOYER... MY GREATEST SUCCESS...
HE OUTLIVED THE OTHERS... THE SOONER YOU INJECT THE SERUM THE BETTER, SINCE I KILLED HIM, HE WAS MUCH HANDIER! JUST AS YOU'LL BE, COLBERT! YOU MAY EVEN SHARE THE SAME PADDED CELL!
HUTCHINS' BEEN OUT OF THE CELL FOR SOME TIME, MANDRELL...

N-NOOOOO!!
GEEEE-YAH-HHHH!!
THE ECHO OF THE INSANE SHRIEKING RANG THROUGH THE OLD HOUSE, AS THE REVENGE-DRIVEN DEAD THING PLUNGED TOWARD ITS TORMENTOR! MERCIFULLY, COLBERT COLLAPSED AS MANDRELL'S SCREAMS JOINED THE DIN...
A STREAM OF SUNLIGHT ON HIS FACE CAUSED COLBERT TO STIR...
MORNING... WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
HE SEARCHED THE HOUSE, FINDING NOTHING... THEN STEPPED OUTSIDE...
CROWD GATHERED! SHOULD I LOOK? DO I REALLY WANT TO SEE?
DR. COLBERT COULD NOT STOP HIS FEET, NOR HIS EYES... AT LAST HUTCHINS HAD FOUND THE PEACE HE'D SCREAMED TEN YEARS FOR, SHARING IT WITH MANDRELL, WHOSE DEATH-FROZEN FACE WOULD SHRIEK FOR ETERNITY!
RATHER A GRAVE ENDING, BUT A LEAST MANDRELL GOT SOMETHING TO SHOUT ABOUT... IF HE ISN'T TOO CHOKED UP! NOW, TAKE ON MY NEXT TERROR-TALE... IT'S A SCREAM!

NO SENSE IN WAITING AROUND, FELLOW FIENDS... THERE'S SOME ***NEFARIOUS NECROMANCY*** UNDERWAY IN THE CASTLE AHEAD, AND YOU'LL WANT TO BE ON HAND FOR SOME ***SINISTER SORCERY*** AS VALDAR STRETCHES TO THE LIMIT HIS POWERS OF...

BLACK MAGIC

 ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

...EXCEPT BY ME!
HOW LONG MUST WE BE BORED BY THIS PETTY TRICKSTER? I GROW TIRED OF HIS ARROGANCE!
I HEAR THE WHISPERS OF DISBELIEF! WATCH THEN, FOOL...
...AND LEARN!
LEARN OF THE POWERS OF VALDAR! LEARN THE LESSON OF ALL WHO DOUBT... THE PRICE OF KNOWLEDGE COMES HIGH...
AAARRRGHHH!
...AND MUST BE PAID!
THE PERFORMANCE IS OVER!
NEVER WERE MY TALENTS HONED TO A FINER EDGE THAN NOW... THE ULTIMATE ACHIEVEMENT MUST COME... TONIGHT!

WHY HURRY, VALDAR? SURELY WE'VE NOT SEEN ALL YOUR MAGIC! WHAT OF YOUR SPELLS AND CHARMS... AND LOVE POTIONS?
HOW DARE YOU LAY HANDS ON MY PERSON?!
AWAY! THINK MY FAVORS ARE TO BE GRANTED TO EVERY LADY-IN-WAITING AND CHAMBERMAID?
VALDAR... PLEASE!
WHY SETTLE FOR THE AFFECTIONS OF ANYONE FROM THIS COURT WHEN I CAN CHOOSE FROM THE AGES! I'M READY... I CAN FEEL IT!
SIMON!
YOU LOUT! ARISE! WE'VE BUSINESS TO ATTEND...
...IN THE CRYPTS!

M-MASTER, PERHAPS WE SHOULDN'T... WE'VE NO RIGHT TO DISTURB THE SLEEP OF THE DEAD!
RIGHT IS WHAT MY MAGIC MAKES IT, DOLT! AND THE DEAD BUT OBJECTS FOR OUR USE!
TOO LONG HAVE I STAYED MY SKILLS... PERFORMING LIKE A JESTER FOR THE FOOLS OF THE COURT! TONIGHT, SIMON, I ENACT THE SUPREME SORCERY... THE RAISING OF THE DEAD!
IS THIS THE USE TO WHICH YOU PUT THE SKILLS I TAUGHT YOU, VALDAR? SHAME!
YOU! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...
YOU WERE TOO TALENTED AN APPRENTICE TO SO ABUSE OUR ART! I DID NOT RAISE YOU... EDUCATE YOU... FOR EVIL SUCH AS THIS!
YOU TAUGHT ME WELL, OLD ONE, I'VE SINCE BECOME YOUR EQUAL... AND TONIGHT, I'LL PROVE YOUR BETTER!
HEED ME, VALDAR! ABANDON THIS COURSE ON WHICH YOUR AMBITION LEADS... YOU CANNOT KNOW THE CONSEQUENCES!
THINK I'M STILL YOUR CRINGING APPRENTICE? I'M EQUAL TO ANY TASK OF NECROMANCY, OLD MAN! FEEL MY POWER!

YOU HAVE GREAT SKILL, VALDAR... IF ONLY YOU HAD GREAT REASON!
LET THE DEAD REST! RETURN TO THE PATH MY TEACHINGS LED YOU!
I KNOW WHEREOF I SPEAK, VALDAR! THE REAWAKENED DEAD ARE NOT TO BE CONTROLLED... THEIR EVIL NOT TO BE OVERCOMED! HEED ME!
ENOUGH, ANCIENT BABBLER!
EVEN AS YOU WARD OFF MY SPELLS, SO DO I TURN AWAY YOURS! WE'VE PLAYED ENOUGH GAMES... I HAVE BUSINESS IN THE CRYPTS!
I RAISED YOU LIKE A SON, VALDAR! DOES YOUR MAD SCHEME MAKE YOU DEAF? COME BACK! DON'T DO IT!
M-MASTER... PERHAPS THE OLD MAN IS RIGHT!
HE IS RIGHT TO FEAR MY POWER! BUT HIS WORDS WILL NOT STOP MY PROVING IT!

THE OLD MAN'S SHOUTS AND WARNINGS ARE LEFT FAR BEHIND AS VALDAR'S TORCH GUIDES THEM DEEP INTO THE TOMB'S MUSTY DANKNESS...
THIS IS THE ONE! THE LADY ROWENA... HER BEAUTY IS LEGEND!
B-BUT... SHE'S BEEN DEAD NEAR A HUNDRED YEARS!
LABORIOUSLY, THE LONG-DECAYED BURDEN IS TRANSPORTED FROM ITS RESTING PLACE...
THICK OX! IT MATTERS NOT! I CAN RECLAIM ANY REMAINS... TONIGHT, ONE GIRL... TOMORROW, A DOZEN MEN... A LEGION! AN ARMY!
UP WINDING STONE STAIRS, THROUGH SILENT ARCHED CORRIDORS, TO THE SINISTER GLOOM OF THE SORCERER'S CHAMBERS...
MINSTRELS SANG OF THE FAIR FLESH THAT ROUNDED THESE BONES... NOW I'LL CALL IT UP FOR OUR CENTURY TO BEHOLD!
THEN, FROM THE DARKNESS BEYOND THE CANDLES, A STIRRING...
SAY NOT THE WORDS, VALDAR! HAVE MY TEACHINGS EVER BEEN FALSE?
IT'S WELL YOU STAYED, OLD FOOL, FOR NOW I'LL SHOW YOU THE LIMITS OF YOUR TEACHING, HOWEVER TRUE!
ONCE STARTED IT CANNOT BE STOPPED! DON'T DO I---
REGIUS MALLEUM ... SHIBBIEOTH NOSTARE VEX...

LLARTH COMGUTH... TANNEUS KRIIGUM...
...ARISE!
WHAT SAY YOU NOW, ANCIENT ONE? WILL YOU SIT AT MY FEET AND LEARN FROM YOUR PUPIL?
EEEEE-YAAHHH!!
WHAT'S THIS?! CEASE! OBEY ME!
MASTER! SHE'S KILLING ME! MASTER!
YOU'VE RECALLED THE FLESH, BUT DID YOU THINK THE LONG-DEAD BRAIN WOULD RETAIN ITS KNOWLEDGE AND SANITY? THERE ARE NO SPELLS FOR DECAYED MINDS!
THE CREATURE HAS THE STRENGTH OF MADNESS! RELEASE HIM, WITCH!
WILL YOU DEVOTE THE YEARS TO RETRAINING THIS MINDLESS BEAUTY YOU HAVE SUMMONED? COULD YOU CONTROL AN ARMY SUCH AS THIS AS YOU VISUALIZED?
DO YOU THINK ME A FOOL WITHOUT CONTROL, OLD MAN? WHAT MAGIC HAS CREATED, IT CAN DESTROY!
MUGIIRK SUENNAT... HTUGMOC HTRALL...

XEV ERATSON HTOEIBBIHS... MUELLAM SUIGER...
...RETURN!
M-MY HANDS! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MY HANDS!
N-NO... NO! IT CAN'T BE! NOOOOOOO!
I TRIED TO WARN YOU... STOP YOU! BUT IN YOUR LUST FOR POWER YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN... PERHAPS YOU MIGHT HAVE GUESSED...
...YOU, WHOM I TRAINED AND RAISED ... RAISED FROM THE DEAD AS YOU DID THAT POOR GIRL!
WELL, KIDDIES, THAT'S THE WAY THE CONJURER CRUMBLES! POOR VALDAR ... EVEN HIS SERVANT, SIMON IS PRETTY CHOKED UP ABOUT THE WHOLE THING... AND YOU'RE GONNA BE CHOKED UP ABOUT MY NEXT YELL-YARN!

YOU ***EERIE ENTHUSIASTS*** ARE JUST IN TIME TO TAKE PART IN A LITTLE TERROR TRANSACTION I'M ARRANGING... AS USUAL IN MY DEMONIACAL DEALS, THERE ARE A FEW STRINGS ATTACHED, AS JEWELLER ***LESTER DARROW*** FINDS OUT IN THIS LITTLE GEM I CALL...

DEEP RUBY!

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

I'VE DEALT IN GEMS MOST OF MY LIFE YET NEVER HAD I SEEN THE MATCH OF THE GLIMMERING RED OVAL BEFORE ME...
SO LARGE... SO PERFECT...I-IT CAN'T BE REAL...
TAKE YOUR TIME... LOOK IT OVER CLOSELY...
HOW... HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT FOR IT?
MONEY ISN'T THE OBJECT. THE IMPORTANT THING IS... DO YOU WANT IT? LOOK CLOSELY... DECIDE!
IT'S TOO CRAZY... YOU'RE UP TO SOMETHING! FIND ANOTHER SUCKER!
DON'T BE HASTY, MR. DARROW...
WHY NOT HAVE JUST ONE MORE LOOK? JUST TO BE CERTAIN... A GOOD CLOSE LOOK...
PERHAPS I WILL... ONE MORE GLANCE CAN'T HURT...
YES... BUT NOT JUST A GLANCE! STUDY IT. THE RICH FULL COLOR, THAT DEEP GLEAMING RED...
EXAMINE THE VASTNESS, THE COMPLEXITY WITHIN... BEYOND THE CUT SURFACE, THERE'S MORE... MUCH MORE!
YES... YES!
I MUST HAVE IT!

EVEN AS I WAS UTTERING THE WORDS I FELT DRAWN MORE AND MORE TO THAT SWIRLING BLOOD RED VASTNESS THAT SPARKLED AND GLITTERED BEFORE ME....
...MUST HAVE IT... MUST HAVE IT... MUST...
UNTIL THE TERRIBLE EXTENT OF MY FASCINATION BEGAN SLOWLY TO PENETRATE MY OVERWHELMED SENSES....
THE RUBY... I'M INSIDE IT! INSIDE!
AMONG THE HANDLERS OF PRECIOUS STONES, THERE ARE DARK RUMORS VAGUELY ALLUDED TO... STRANGE TALES OF DREAMING JEWELS, SORCERERS' STONES! PRICELESS GEMS CURSED AND HAUNTED... AND IN ONE MADDENING INSTANT, I KNEW THEM TO BE TRUE!
THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING... IT CAN'T BE!
YET IT WAS. LIKE SOME WANDERER OF THE COSMOS I PLUNGED DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THIS MICROCOSMIC UNIVERSE... AT THE MERCY OF A POWER BEYOND MY COMPREHENSION....
AND AS I SWEPT ON CAME THE GROWING UNCOMFORTABLE SENSATION THAT I WAS NOT ALONE IN THIS NIGHTMARE DIMENSION...

OUTSIDER! ANOTHER OUTSIDER!
YAHH!
SCREECHING HORROR SWOOPED TOWARD ME ON DEMON WINGS... MY WITS FAILED ME, BUT SOMEHOW, MY REFLEXES DID NOT!
NOTHING COULD HAVE BEEN SHORTER LIVED THAN THIS BRIEF VICTORY FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THIS DEEP RUBY WORLD WERE NOT LIMITED IN NUMBER..
OUTSIDER! OUTSIDER!
NO! GOOD GOD NO!
...NOR STRENGTH AND AGILITY...
WE HAVE HIM! HE'S OURS!
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? I DON'T MEAN ANY HARM! LEAVE ME ALONE... PLEASE!
HELPLESSLY IN THE GRIP OF THE SUPERNATURAL, I WAS PULLED THROUGH THE EVER-SHIFTING ATMOSPHERE TOWARD AN INCREASINGLY THUNDEROUS GRINDING SOUND...
T-THAT THING AHEAD... WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? WHAT IS THAT?
IT IS THE SOURCE... THE CENTER OF THE RUBY UNIVERSE...

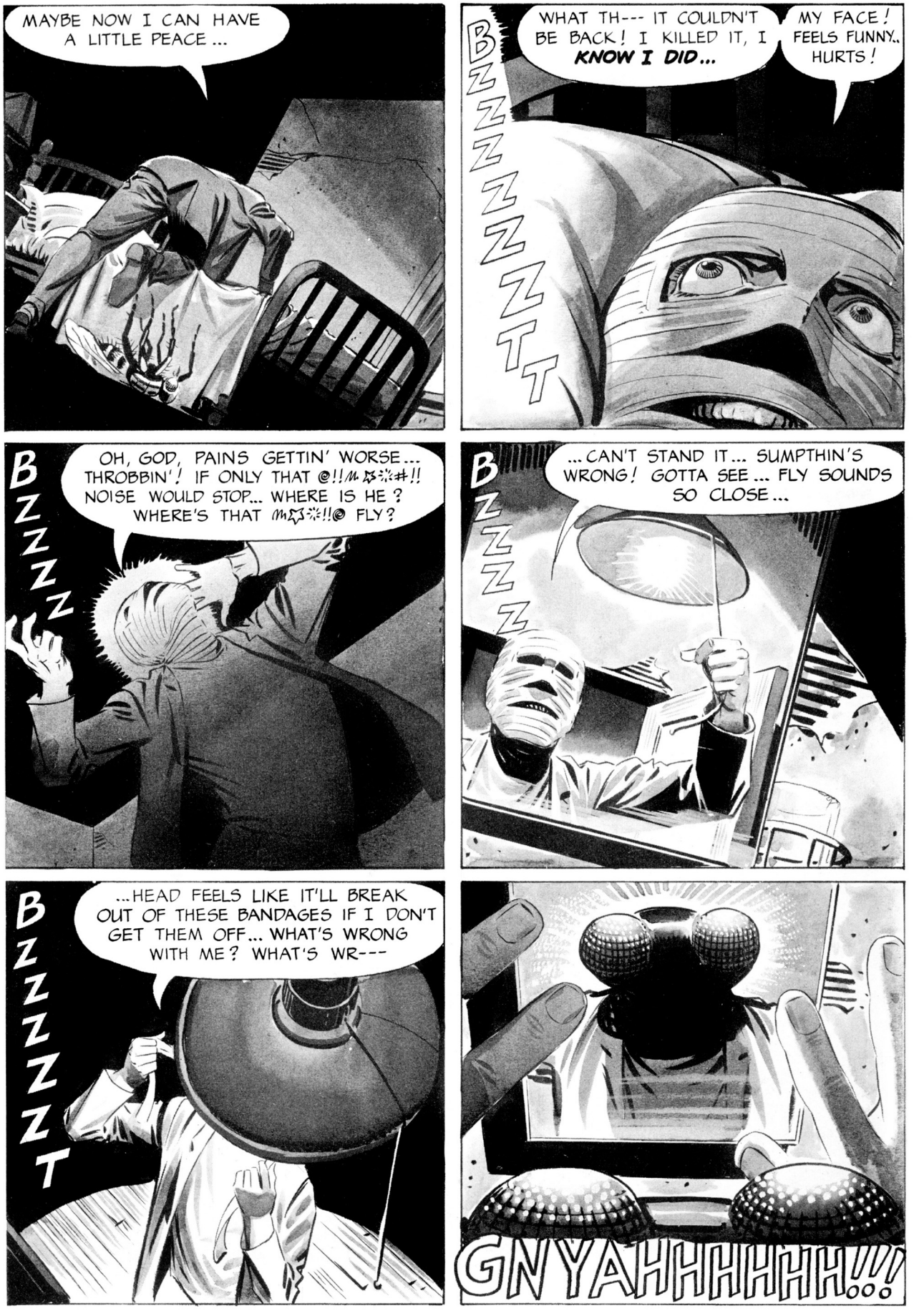
I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND... WHAT'S IT'S PURPOSE? WHY BRING ME HERE?
SURELY, IT IS OBVIOUS, OUTSIDER... EVEN TO YOU. THINK... WHAT IS THE COLOR OF THE RUBY?
...BLOOD RED!
EVER DEEPENING EVER GLITTERING, EVER FRESH!
IN THE FACE OF GRINDING DEATH, I FOUND THE STRENGTH OF INSANE DESPERATION...
NOOOO
...PLUNGING WITH DRIVING ANIMAL FEAR AWAY FROM THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE... SLASHING THROUGH LAYER AFTER LAYER OF NEBULOUS NIGHTMARE...
HELP! THERE MUST BE SOMEONE... SOME WAY OUT! I'LL DO ANYTHING... HELP ME!
..UNTIL I POUNDED WITH BLEEDING HANDS AGAINST THE OUTER SHELL OF THIS UNIVERSE OF HORROR!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY OUT, MR. DARROW... YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY A SMALL PRICE...
ANYTHING! THOSE CREATURES ARE RIGHT BEHIND ME... ANY PRICE YOU ASK, I AGREE TO!
THIS TIME THERE WAS NO FADING OR SWIRLING... ONLY ONE VAST ALL CONSUMING JOLT!
AIEEE

NOW, AS I CROUCH HERE IN THE SHADOWS, STARING OUT INTO THE VERY REAL EVERYDAY WORLD, I REALIZE FULLY THE PRICE REQUIRED OF ME TO ESCAPE THAT DEEP RUBY HELL...
...AND I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I MUST DO AND KEEP DOING UNTIL I FIND ONE WHO IS WILLING TO PAY THE SAME PRICE... SOMEONE... ANYONE!
PSSSST! MISTER...
DON'T GET EXCITED! I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT'LL INTEREST YOU!
EVER SEE ANYTHING LIKE THIS?
WELL, WRITHING READERS, HOW'S YOUR SALES RESISTANCE? DON'T EXAMINE THE MERCHANDISE TOO CLOSELY OR YOU MAY FINISH THE ISSUE FROM INSIDE THE RUBY! BETTER PLAY IT SAFE AND RUN ON TO THE NEXT OF MY NAUSEATING NOVELETTES!

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

NO, NOT YOU... LOUSY FLY!
YEAH, YEAH. I BEEN FOLLOWIN' THE PAPERS... I GAVE YOU YOUR MONEY'S WORTH, RIGHT? DON'T WORRY THEY'RE NOT GONNA BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY ME, LET ALONE MAKE ANY CONNECTIONS TO YOU...
POLICE SEEK SLAYER OF KEY WITNESS
THAT'S RIGHT. DOC DID THE OPERATION, SEEMED TO GO PRETTY WELL... HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE OVER TODAY TO CHANGE THE BANDAGES AN' HAVE A LOOK...
THERE'S THE DOOR... MUST BE HIM NOW. SO DON'T SWEAT IT... ONCE THESE BANDAGES ARE OFF, WE'RE BOTH IN THE CLEAR!
ABOUT TIME, DOC! THIS GAUZE IS REALLY STARTIN' TO SMELL... I'M EVEN ATTRACTIN' FLIES!
YOU KNOW IF I COME TOO OFTEN, SOMEONE'S BOUND TO TUMBLE... SIT DOWN, LET ME TAKE A LOOK...
YOU GOT TO ME JUST IN TIME. YOUR PICTURE'S PLASTERED ALL OVER THE PAPERS... EVERYONE'S UP IN ARMS! YOUR HIT WAS WELL THOUGHT OF... NEVER HARMED A FLY... NO ONE LIKES TO SEE A GUY LIKE THAT KNOCKED OFF!
LOOK, MAN I DIDN'T TELL YOU HOW TO HANDLE THIS OPERATION, DON'T YOU GIVE ME ADVICE ON MY RACKET...
WELL...?
DOESN'T LOOK AS GOOD AS IT SHOULD! HEALING VERY SLOWLY... I'VE GOT SOME STUFF HERE I'D BETTER PUT ON IT...

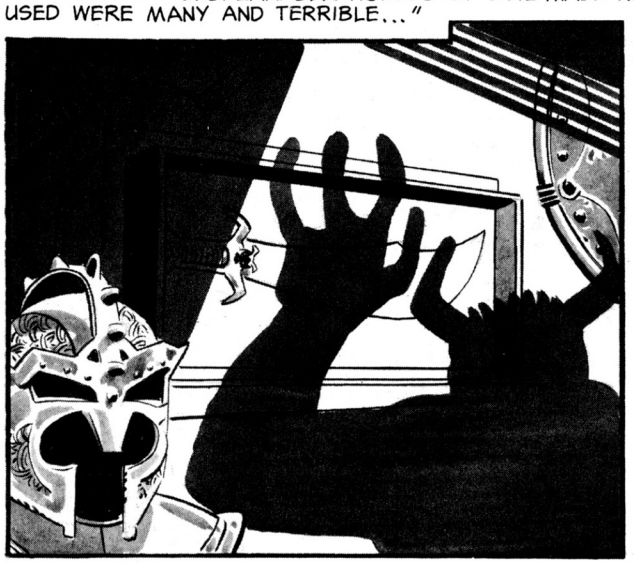
YAAGHHHHH!!
@%$%&#m!!
WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT HAPPENED?
THAT #@$¢!m FLY! GOT ON MY FACE! I THINK IT BIT ME...
RELAX, IT'S ONLY A HOUSE FLY... THAT STUFF I PUT ON WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU. I'LL EVEN THROW IN A SEDATIVE TO HELP YOU RELAX...
... IT'LL HIT YOU FAST, YOU'LL BE ASLEEP IN NO TIME!
SLEEP? WHO CAN SLEEP WITH THAT@!M% FLY ALWAYS BUZZIN' AROUND!
BACK AGAIN, EH? LOTTA NERVE... BUT THIS TIME I'M NAILIN' YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL...
...FLATTER'N THAT WITNESS I CROAKED!
WHAP!


MAYBE NOW I CAN HAVE A LITTLE PEACE ...
BZZZZZZTT
WHAT TH--- IT COULDN'T BE BACK! I KILLED IT, I KNOW I DID...
MY FACE! FEELS FUNNY.. HURTS!
BZZZZ
OH, GOD, PAINS GETTIN' WORSE... THROBBIN'! IF ONLY THAT @!!%☆☆#!! NOISE WOULD STOP... WHERE IS HE? WHERE'S THAT %☆☆!!@ FLY?
BZZZZ
...CAN'T STAND IT... SUMPTHIN'S WRONG! GOTTA SEE... FLY SOUNDS SO CLOSE...
BZZZZZT
...HEAD FEELS LIKE IT'LL BREAK OUT OF THESE BANDAGES IF I DON'T GET THEM OFF... WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME? WHAT'S WR---
GNYAHHHHHH!!!

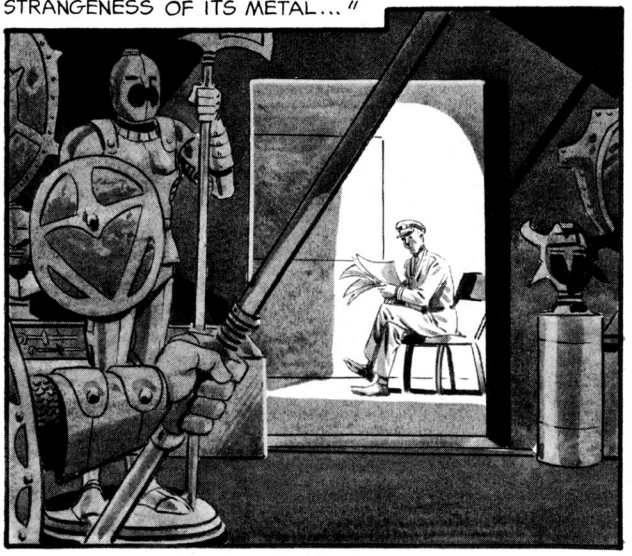
IT CAN'T BE! THIS COULDN'T HAPPEN TO ME! IT JUST COU-- THAT SHADOW!
KA-WHOM!!
S-SOMEONE'S TRYIN' TO KILL ME... AFTER ME LIKE I'M A... A... FLY!
CAN'T KEEP THIS UP... SOONER OR LATER IT'S GOING TO GET ME...
BA-DUUMM!
...GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE... GOT TO GET OUT!!
KER-RASH!

EEEEEEE!
NINE STORIES DOWN TO SOLID CONCRETE! WHAT MADE HIM JUMP?!
OTHER TENENTS SAY HE'D BEEN SHOUTING AND SCREAMING ALL EVENING... JUDGING FROM THE BANDAGES, HE MUSTA JUST HAD AN OPERATION... MAYBE THAT DROVE HIM TO IT...
NOT A PRETTY SIGHT... IMPACT SQUASHED HIM LIKE A FLY!
FUNNY YOU SHOULD SAY THAT...
LOOK AT THIS... HE MUSTA BEEN TEARIN' AT THE BANDAGES AS HE FELL...
...FLY WAS LODGED IN HIS EAR, TRAPPED BY THE BANDAGE... BET IT'S BUZZING WAS NEARLY ENOUGH TO DRIVE HIM TO JUMP!
SO, OUR KOOKY KILLER ONLY DREAMED HE KILLED THE FLY, AND OF COURSE, GOT MUCH TOO WRAPPED UP IN HIS DREAM... IN FACT, HE WAS VERY HARD HIT BY THE WHOLE THING! WELL, THAT'S THE WAY THE FLY FLITS... NOW WHY DON'T YOU FLIT TO MY NEXT GORY STORY!

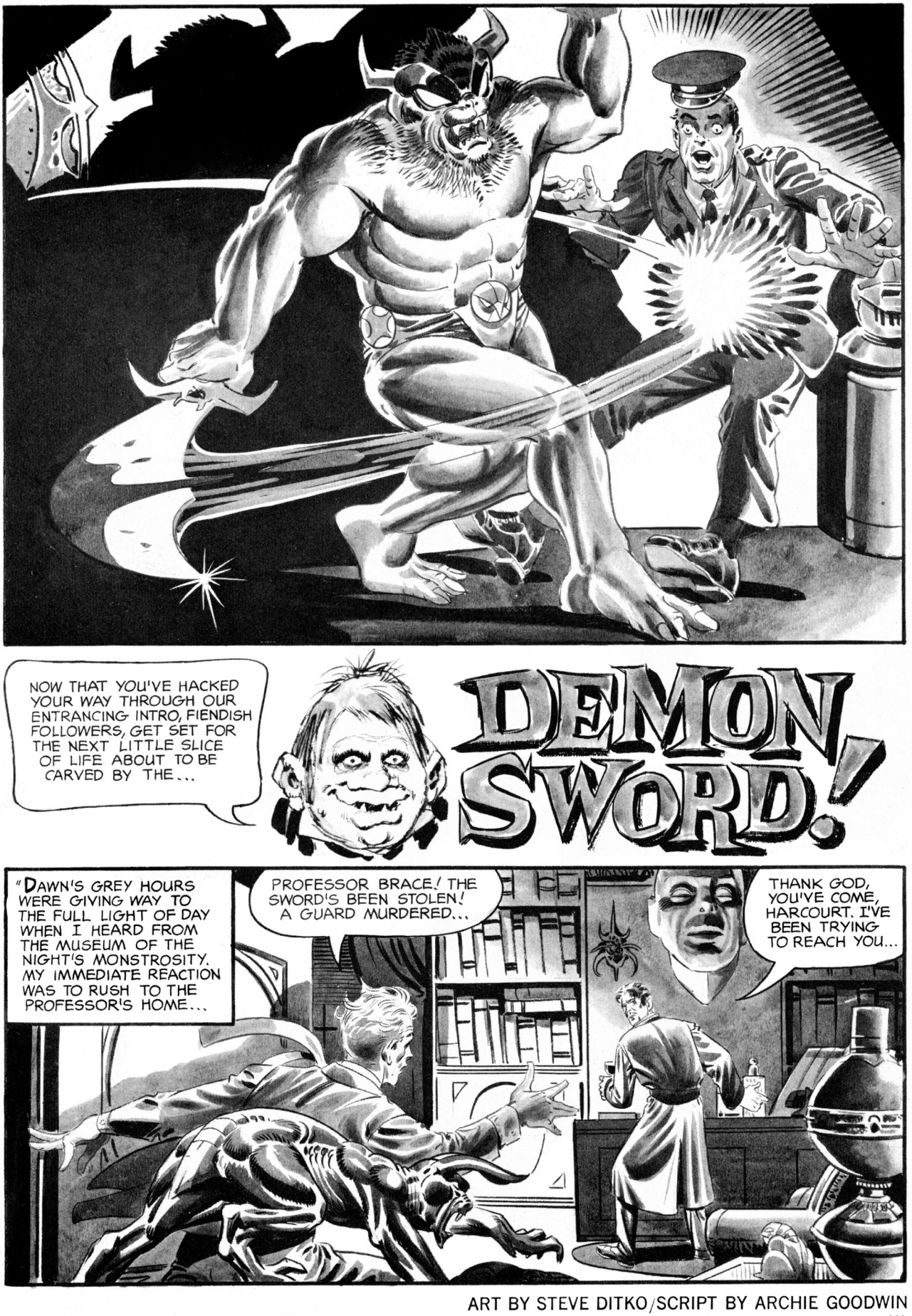
PROLOGUE: "THE OLDEST LEGENDS OF MANY CULTURES GIVE VEILED HINTS OF A TIME IN PREHISTORY WHEN UNSPEAKABLE HORDES OF EVIL MADE WAR ON THE FORCES OF GOOD, AND THE WEAPONS THEY USED WERE MANY AND TERRIBLE..."



"SUCH WAS THE SWORD PROFESSOR BRACE UNEARTHED IN OUR ANDES EXPEDITION. FEW EXPERTS WOULD WILLINGLY ADMIT THIS, EVEN I, HIS MOST AVID DISCIPLE, HAD MY DOUBTS... YET NONE COULD EXPLAIN ITS AGE OR THE STRANGENESS OF ITS METAL..."



"IT, AND OTHER ITEMS UNCOVERED BY OUR MUSEUM-SPONSORED EXCAVATION, OPENED FANTASTIC BYWAYS AND AREAS OF SPECULATION TO THE EARTH'S PAST. BUT NO ONE, NOT EVEN BRACE, UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE, GUESSED THE PATH OF HORROR IT WOULD CUT THROUGH THE PRESENT!



ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

"AS CLOSELY AS CAN BE DETERMINED, SOME FEW MINUTES AFTER THE SWORD HAD BEEN STOLEN, MILES AWAY, ARTHUR CARNABY, THE MUSEUM'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WAS WORKING LATE. HIS BUTLER WAS BRINGING UP A SNACK WHEN SCREAMS FROM CARNABY'S STUDY FILLED THE HOUSE..."

"AND IN HESITANT TORTURED WORDS, PROFESSOR BRACE TOLD ME WHAT HE KNEW..."

"THE STUDY DOOR WAS LOCKED AND THE SOUNDS FROM WITHIN GREW IN VOLUME AND TERROR. THE BUTLER AND ANOTHER SERVANT FRANTICALLY BATTERED AT THE DOOR UNTIL AT LAST IT GAVE WAY..."

"THEY LIVED TO WISH THEY HAD NEVER GONE INTO THE ROOM! CARNABY WAS SLAUGHTERED WITH THE STOLEN SWORD, AND ITS HIDEOUS WIELDER ESCAPED, STEPPING THROUGH THE VERY WALLS!"

"MEANWHILE, NO MORE THAN FIVE MINUTES LATER, LYMAN WALKER, DIRECTOR OF THE MUSEUM, HAVING BEEN INFORMED OF THE GUARD'S MURDER, WAS BEING DRIVEN BACK TO THE CITY..."
"SEEMINGLY FROM NOWHERE, A TERRIFYING FIGURE LOOMED UP IN THE GLARE OF THE CAR'S HEADLIGHTS ... INSTINCTIVELY, THE STUNNED CHAUFFEUR SWERVED, SENDING THE CAR CAREENING FROM THE HIGHWAY..."
"ACCORDING TO THE CHAUFFEUR'S DYING STATEMENT, HE CAME TO AFTER THE WRECK TO FIND THAT WALKER HAD BEEN THROWN CLEAR... ONLY TO LIE HELPLESS UNDER THE FLASHING BLADE OF A HELLISH, DEMONIAC THING! THE MAN DIED STILL TRYING TO ADEQUATELY DESCRIBE THE HORROR OF THE CREATURE..."
"PROFESSOR BRACE STOPPED TALKING AND A LONG MOMENT OF SILENCE ELAPSED AS I DESPERATELY SOUGHT AFTER SOMETHING TO SAY..."
B-BUT..IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE! EVEN ASSUMING A CURSE COULD ACTUALLY BE ON THE WEAPON... WHY SHOULD TWO PEOPLE NOT INVOLVED IN UNEARTHING THE SWORD BE SLAIN?
THINK ABOUT IT, PAUL... WHO WOULD STAND TO GAIN WITH WALKER AND CARNABY DEAD?
WELL... WITH BOTH DEAD, THE MUSEUM WOULD NEED A DIRECTOR ... AND NEXT IN LINE WOULD BE ... WOULD BE...
WOULD BE ME! RIGHT, PAUL?

"BRACE WHEELED ABRUPTLY AND LEAD ME DOWNSTAIRS TO HIS WORKROOM..."

"OVER THE YEARS, BRACE HAD BUILT UP A FINE PRIVATE COLLECTION. HIS WORKROOM WAS A SMALL MUSEUM IN ITSELF..."

"THE DEEP CRIMSON STAINS FORMED A TRAIL LEADING OFF THE TABLE. MY GAZE RACE OVER IT TO..."

"I TURNED TO FIND THE PROFESSOR TAKING DOWN SOME ARMOR FROM THE WALL..."

"BRACE THEN SAT DOWN, CLUTCHING ARMS AND ARMOR TO HIM...
THE SWORD DRAWS FORTH THE EVIL WHILE I'M ASLEEP, WHEN MY CONCIOUSNESS CAN'T RALLY MY GOOD SIDE TO FIGHT IT...BUT IF I COULD STILL RETAIN MY CONSCIOUSNESS WHILE ASLEEP, OR AT LEAST BE SUGGESTIBLE TO USING MY GOOD SIDE...
A HYPNOTIC TRANCE! WITH ME TO CONTROL YOU, IT COULD BE DONE IN A HYPNOTIC TRANCE!
"WE HAD BOTH PLAYED WITH HYPNOTISM FOR OUR OWN AMUSEMENT, BUT NOW WE BEGAN IN DEADLY EARNEST NOT KNOWING FOR CERTAIN WHAT FORCES WE MIGHT RELEASE, FOR WHAT ENDS!"
YOU ARE GROWING TIRED...VERY TIRED ...DRIFTING INTO A DEEP SLUMBER...
HE'LL BE OPEN TO SUGGESTION FROM ME... GOD HELP US IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH AGAINST THE SWORD'S POWER!
"HARDLY HAD THE TRANCE TAKEN EFFECT THAN THE SWORD BEGAN TO GLOW WITH AN UNEARTHLY LIGHT...AND OUT OF PROFESSOR BRACE'S BODY, A THING OF UNSPEAKABLE EVIL LEAPED FORWARD TO SEIZE IT!"
"AND IN ANSWER TO MY CRIES, ANOTHER FIGURE APPEARED, ASSUMING THE ARMOR BRACE HAD LEFT IN PREPARATION..."
PROFESSOR! THERE'S EVIL IN THIS ROOM... YOUR EVIL! BUT WITHIN YOU IS GREAT GOOD... USE IT...
...FIGHT, PROFESSOR, FIGHT!!
"SO IT BEGAN...THE GOOD AND EVIL OF A MAN LOCKED IN MORTAL COMBAT, SWIRLING AND FIGHTING...SOMETIMES IN THE ROOM, SOMETIMES IN PHANTOM DIMENSIONS CRISS-CROSSING OUR OWN WORLD THROUGH WHICH CREATURES LIKE THESE COULD STALK AT WILL..."

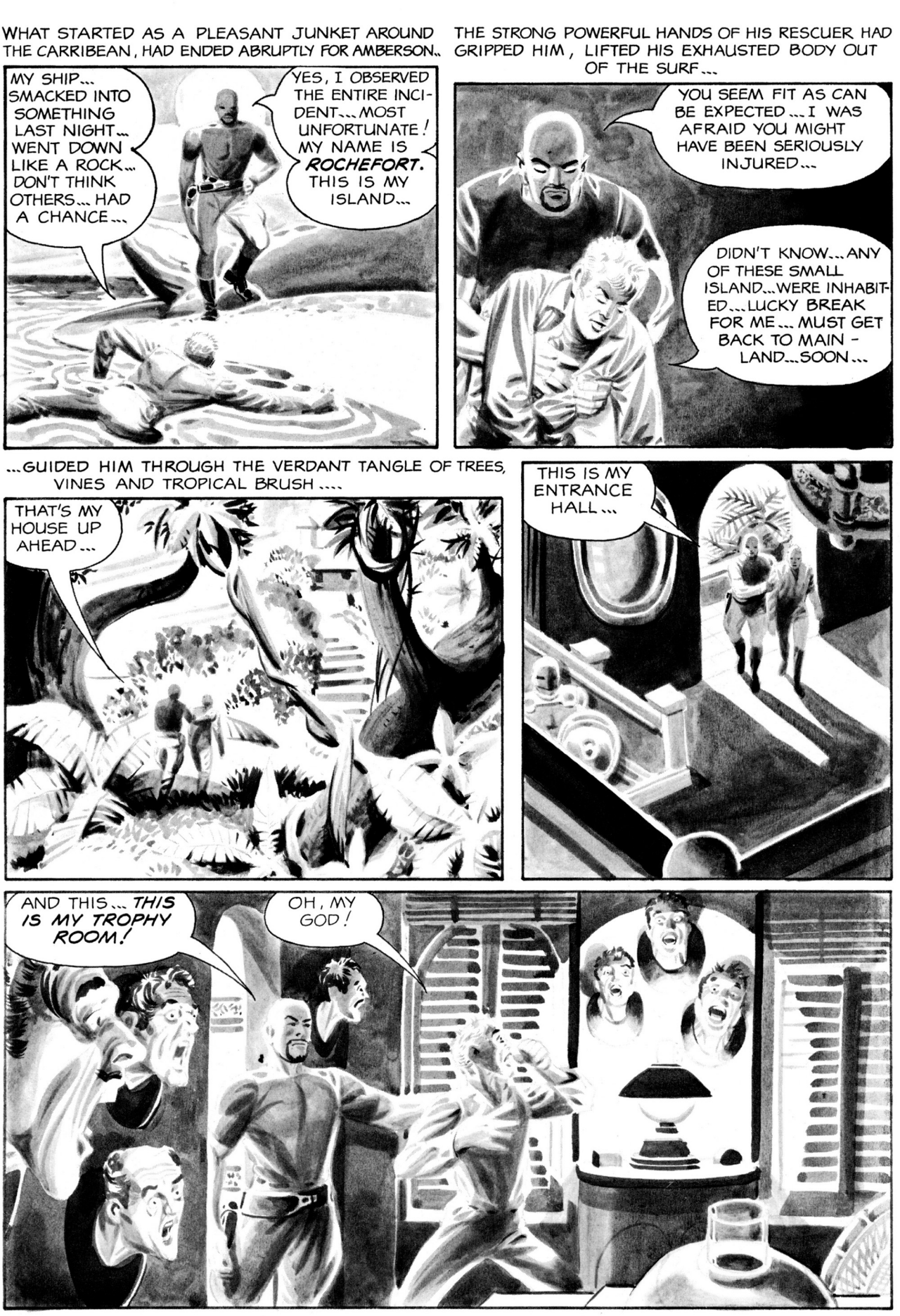
"THERE WAS FAR MORE GOOD THAN EVIL IN THE PROFESSOR, IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN STRONGER...BUT THERE WAS NO WAY TO ESTIMATE THE POWER OF THAT HELLISH SWORD..."

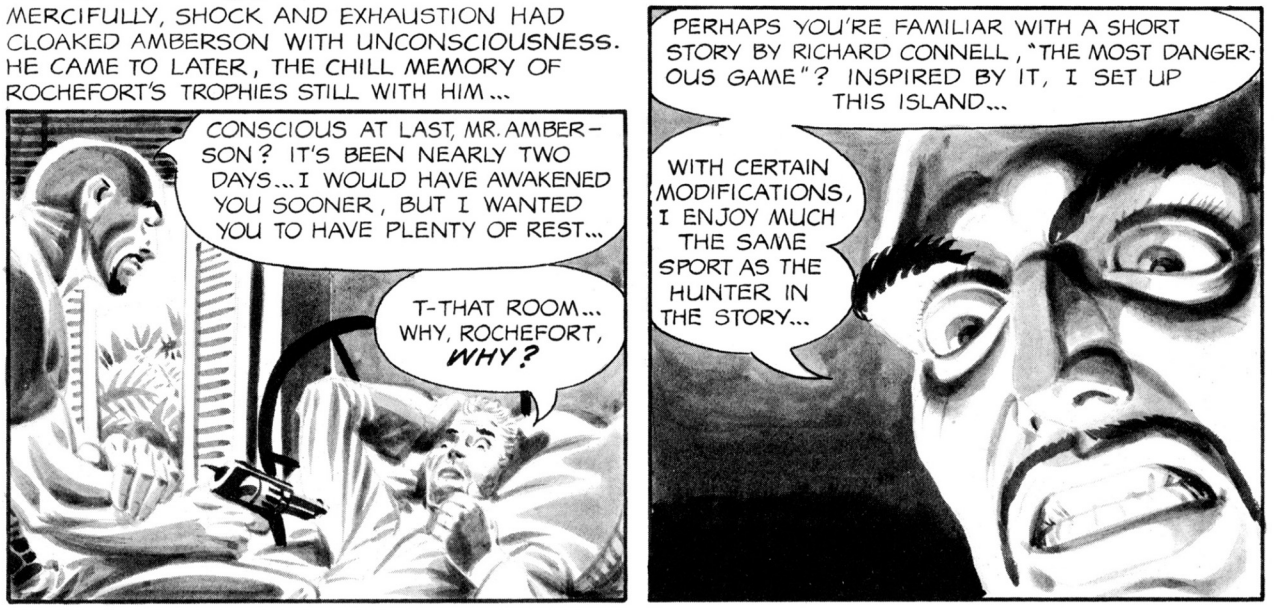
"MOST OF THE TIME I COULD NOT SEE THE COMBATANTS AS THEY FOUGHT IN OTHER DIMENSIONS, OTHER WORLDS ...BUT I COULD SEE BRACE'S TORMENTED FACE...AND I KNEW WE WERE LOSING..."

"MY VOICE GREW HOARSE WITH STRAIN AS I RAGED TO KEEP HIM GOING...TEARS OF EFFORT ROLLED DOWN THE PROFESSOR'S FACE, RED AND SWOLLEN IN THE LAST DITCH STAND AGAINST THE SWORD'S PRIMORDIAL EVIL..."

"THEN FROM THE SHADOW WORLD BATTLEGROUND CAME AN UNHUMAN SHRIEK THAT ENDED AS A CRY OF PAIN IN PROFESSOR BRACE'S THROAT..."
AIEEEEEEEEE!
EEEEEEEEEE!
"HE SLID TO THE FLOOR AND FOR THE FIRST TIME I NOTICED EACH WOUND OF THE BATTLE WAS UPON HIM. HIS BREATH CAME IN GASPS, BUT HIS FACE WAS SOMEHOW RELAXED..."
PROFESSOR...
WE WON, PAUL...BUT AT A PRICE...WE DESTROYED THE EVIL, BUT IT WAS PART OF ME...YOU CAN'T KILL PART OF A MAN, WITHOUT DESTROYING THE WHOLE!
...THERE'S STILL THE SWORD...DESTROY IT, PAUL... DON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN...DESTROY...IT!
"AND, EYES FIXED ON THE THING THAT HAD WROUGHT HIS DESTRUCTION, PROFESSOR BRACE DIED."
"NOW I STAND IN FRONT OF THE FURNACE, FLAMES STOKED WHITE HOT TO MELT EVEN THE DEMON METAL OF OF THIS SWORD I HOLD. AND YET I HESITATE...I HOLD IT AND WONDER AT THE POWER I FEEL, THE PLEASURE IN HANDLING IT. IF I DON'T DESTROY IT THIS MINUTE, I CAN ALWAYS DO IT THE NEXT...OR CAN I?"
ALL YOU, WRITHING READERS, WITH SPORTING BLOOD CAN STAY HERE AND MAKE BETS, BUT I SUGGEST THE REST OF YOU MOVE ON... JUST IN CASE HARCOURT DECIDES TO KEEP THE SWORD!

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

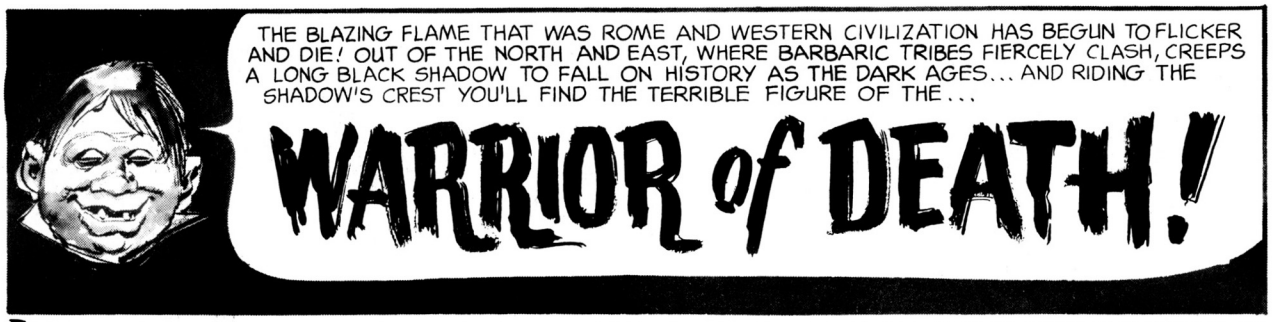

WHAT STARTED AS A PLEASANT JUNKET AROUND THE CARRIBEAN, HAD ENDED ABRUPTLY FOR AMBERSON..
MY SHIP... SMACKED INTO SOMETHING LAST NIGHT... WENT DOWN LIKE A ROCK... DON'T THINK OTHERS... HAD A CHANCE...
YES, I OBSERVED THE ENTIRE INCIDENT... MOST UNFORTUNATE! MY NAME IS ROCHEFORT. THIS IS MY ISLAND...
THE STRONG POWERFUL HANDS OF HIS RESCUER HAD GRIPPED HIM, LIFTED HIS EXHAUSTED BODY OUT OF THE SURF...
YOU SEEM FIT AS CAN BE EXPECTED... I WAS AFRAID YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED...
DIDN'T KNOW... ANY OF THESE SMALL ISLAND... WERE INHABITED... LUCKY BREAK FOR ME... MUST GET BACK TO MAIN - LAND... SOON...
...GUIDED HIM THROUGH THE VERDANT TANGLE OF TREES, VINES AND TROPICAL BRUSH....
THAT'S MY HOUSE UP AHEAD...
THIS IS MY ENTRANCE HALL...
AND THIS... THIS IS MY TROPHY ROOM!
OH, MY GOD!


MERCIFULLY, SHOCK AND EXHAUSTION HAD CLOAKED AMBERSON WITH UNCONSCIOUSNESS. HE CAME TO LATER, THE CHILL MEMORY OF ROCHEFORT'S TROPHIES STILL WITH HIM...
CONSCIOUS AT LAST, MR. AMBERSON? IT'S BEEN NEARLY TWO DAYS...I WOULD HAVE AWAKENED YOU SOONER, BUT I WANTED YOU TO HAVE PLENTY OF REST...
T-THAT ROOM... WHY, ROCHEFORT, WHY?
PERHAPS YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH A SHORT STORY BY RICHARD CONNELL, "THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME"? INSPIRED BY IT, I SET UP THIS ISLAND...
WITH CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS, I ENJOY MUCH THE SAME SPORT AS THE HUNTER IN THE STORY...
"AS A BIOCHEMIST I MADE MY FORTUNE, BUT MY FIRST LOVE WAS ALWAYS BIG GAME HUNTING...YET OVER THE YEARS, I BECAME TOO PROFICIENT AT IT, BORED, JADED... LOST THE THRILL OF THE HUNT..."
"A THRILL NOT COMPLETELY REGAINED EVEN IN THE PURSUIT OF THE SO CALLED 'MOST DANGEROUS GAME'... THERE WAS STILL SOMETHING LACKING...A...A NEED I WAS NOT FULFILLING..."
"THEN, THE SENSATION I STALKED THE WILDS OF EVERY CONTINENT TO ACHIEVE, I DISCOVERED IN MY LABORATORY...A SOLUTION THAT ADDED WHAT DEEP DOWN I HAD ALWAYS WANTED IN THE HUNT...THAT WOULD ENABLE ME TO HUNT, NOT AS MAN WITH HIS MANUFACTURED AIDS, BUT WITH THE STRENGTH AND CUNNING OF... THE BEAST!"

"NEEDLESS TO SAY, MR. AMBERSON, IT FULFILLED ALL MY EXPECTATIONS!"
YOU'RE JUST AS MAD AS THE CHARACTOR IN THE STORY! NO ONE WILLINGLY WANTS TO BE A BEAST ... A WILD STALKING ANIMAL! YOU CAUSE SHIPWRECKS ... TAKE LIVES, FOR THAT?!
INCLUDING YOURS, AMBERSON! UNLESS YOU PROVE BETTER GAME THAN I EXPECT!
LOOK, ROCHEFORT, CAN'T YOU RECONSIDER? IT'S URGENT I GET BACK TO THE MAINLAND...I HADN'T INTENDED TO STAY AWAY THIS LONG...I---
SHUT UP! I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR PERSONEL PROBLEMS... THEY DON'T CONCERN ME!
THIS IS INSANE, ROCHEFORT! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY IT CAN END... CAN'T YOU---
STOP SNIVELING! BE A MAN AND DO YOUR BEST... BE WORTHY OF THE HUNT!
YOU WANT TO LIVE? RETURN TO THE MAINLAND? THERE'S THE ONLY PLACE YOU'LL WIN THE CHANCE FROM ME!
THERE'LL BE A SPLENDID MOON LATER TONIGHT. THE LIGHT MAY HELP YOU... IF YOU LIVE THAT LONG!

THROWING A FEARFUL GLANCE OVER HIS SHOULDER AT THE MADMAN BEHIND HIM, AMBERSON HAD PLUNGED TOWARD THE NIGHT-BLANKETED JUNGLE... DASHING DEEP WITHIN THE LUSH GREENERY, WONDERING IF IT'S RAMPANT VINES AND BRUSH WOULD BECOME SHELTER OR SNARE...
...FROM THE BESTIAL THING ROCHEFORT'S BIOCHEMISTRY HAD MADE OF HIMSELF... FROM THE WILD CREATURE THAT BURSTS FORTH FROM THE HOUSE'S LABORATORY INTO THE NIGHT, LUSTING FOR THE HUNT... AND THE KILL!
AMBERSON HAD RUN, BLUNDERING AND STUMBLING THROUGH THE DARKNESS WITH DESPERATE ABANDON, WITHOUT PLAN OR PATTERN, TRYING ONLY TO KEEP THE BEAST BEHIND HIM...
...UNTIL HE COULD RUN NO MORE!

ROCHEFORT CREPT SLOWLY FORWARD, TOYING WITH HIS GAME ... HIS VOICE NOW THE RASPING COUGH OF A WILD ANIMAL ...
I FEARED YOU'D BE POOR SPORT, AMBERSON... LEAVING AN OBVIOUS TRAIL ... NO STEALTH, NO CUNNING ... DID YOU HOPE TO OUTRUN ME...?
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I RUN ANYMORE.. I'D HOPE TO ESCAPE BUT NOW IT'S TOO LATE!
W-WHAT... WHAT'S HAPPENING...
ON THE MAINLAND THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO'LL HELP ME... KEEP ME CHAINED UP...
...WHENEVER THERE'S A FULL MOON ... BUT YOU DELAYED ME TOO LONG...
...NOW NOTHING CAN PREVENT MY BECOMING A ...
...WEREWOLF!
AARRGGHH!
AND UNLESS ROCHEFORT HAS A SET OF SILVER TEETH, I'D SAY HE'S REACHED THE END OF ANOTHER HUNT... HIS OWN! BUT YOUR HORROR HUNT HASN'T ENDED, BOYS AND GHOULS AS YOU WILL SEE WITH MY NEXT TERROR TALE...



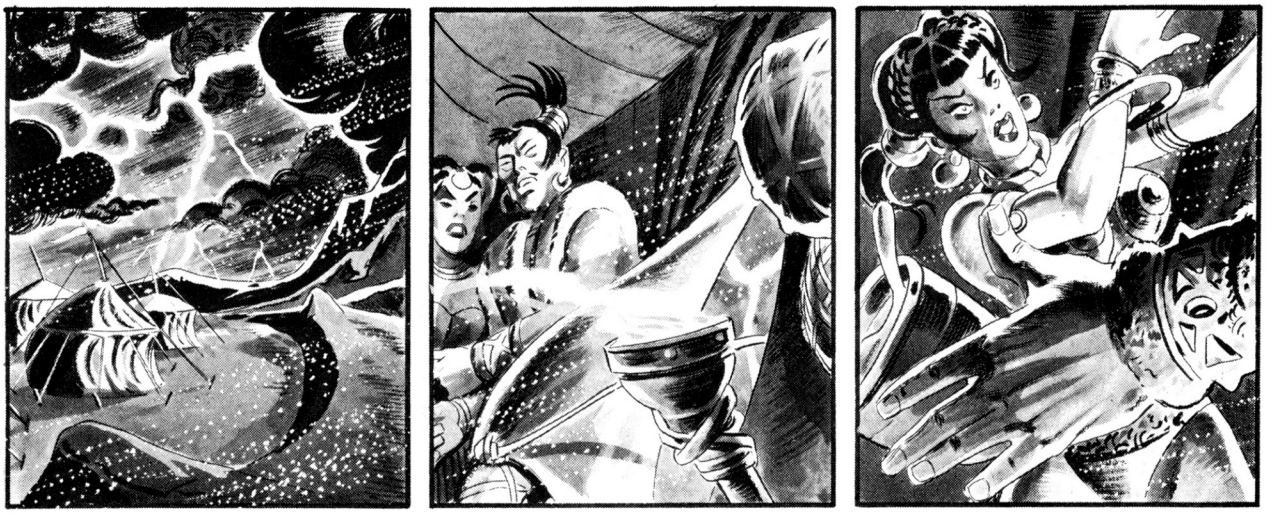
DAYLIGHT WAS SLOWLY FADING OVER THE SILENT CARNAGE THAT HAD NOT LONG BEFORE BEEN THE FRENZY OF BATTLE... WITH IT FADED THE LIFE OF ZAHRAN. HE PRESSED BACK AGAINST THE COLD STONE SUPPORTING HIM AND PEERED WITH TERRIBLE FASCINATION AT THE BRIGHT DOTS OF CRIMSON STAINING THE EARTH BENEATH HIM, KNOWING EACH NEW DROP BROUGHT HIM CLOSER TO A DARKNESS NO SUN'S RAYS WOULD EVER PIERCE...

ART BY STEVE DITKO/SCRIPT BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

NO VOICE ANSWERED ZAHRAN'S QUESTION. AT HIS FEET, THE CRIMSON STAIN GREW BROADER AND DARKER...

ZAHRAN'S DIMMING EYES LIFTED THROUGH THE TWILIGHT HAZE, SOMETHING STIRRED AMONG THE CORPSES, DRIFTING SILENTLY NEARER...

DEATH'S LAUGHTER BECAME THE PEAL OF THUNDER, ENVELOPING THE NIGHT IN A STORM THAT RAGED LIKE A LIVING BEING, ITS HOWLING WINDS AND LASHING RAINS EXTENDING FINGERS ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE, FINDING AND CHILLING THE HEARTS OF MEN... EVEN THOSE LOST IN REVELRY, EVEN THOSE LOST IN CELEBRATION OF A BATTLE WON AND AN ENEMY SLAIN...



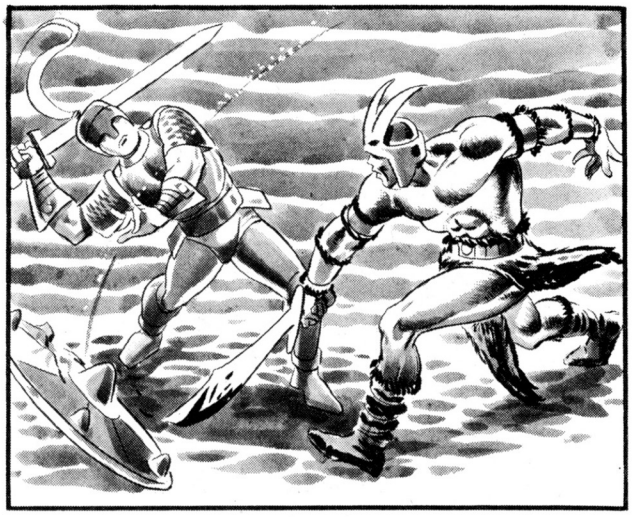
SHEETS OF DRIVING RAIN SWEPT INTO THE TENT OF THE CELEBRANTS, STINGING WINE-REDDENED FACES INTO SOBRIETY. A BRILLIANT BURST OF LIGHTNING ETCHED FOR EVERY EYE AN AWESOME VISION LOOMING IN THE ENTRANCE WAY...

THERE WAS NO TIME FOR FURTHER WORDS, ONLY FURTHER FEARS. ZAHRAN WAS UPON THEM, SWORD RIPPING THE AIR LIKE A SCYTHE, ITS TERRIBLE HARVEST PUNCTUATED BY THE LIGHTNING'S WHITE HOT ILLUMINATION!
SCREAMS WERE DROWNED BY THE THUNDER AND DRIVING TATTOO OF THE RAIN AS ZAHRAN'S BLOODSTAINED FIGURE WHIRLED IN AND OUT OF THE DARKNESS, HIS FLASHING BLADE SPARING NO ONE . . .
TIME AND AGAIN WITHIN THE TENT'S DEATH-ENSHROUDED INTERIOR, ENEMY STEEL FOUND ITS MARK . . .
. . . TO NO VISIBLE EFFECT!
BY DAWN THE STORM HAD ENDED, ITS VIOLENCE WANED AND DISAPPEARED. HIS BACK TO THE SUN'S FIRST RAYS, ZAHRAN STALKED WEARILY AWAY, LEAVING BEHIND ONLY A COLUMN OF THICK BLACK SMOKE AND THE DESOLATE CRY OF CIRCLING VULTURES.
DEATH HAS KEPT HIS BARGAIN. MY BODY IS COATED WITH WOUNDS, YET THEIR PAIN IS SLIGHT AND THEY HEAL WITH UNNATURAL SPEED . . .
THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING . . . LET DEATH NOW LEARN HE'S CHOSEN HIS WARRIOR WELL!

THE LEGEND BEGAN. ZAHRAN THE SCOURGE, ZAHRAN THE INVINCIBLE, ZAHRAN THE MERCILESS... HE SWEPT THROUGH THE EAST LIKE A PLAGUE! THOSE WHO DID NOT PERISH UNDER HIS BLADE SOON JOINED HIS SWELLING RANKS WHICH PUSHED FORWARD LIKE A RAMPAGING JUGGERNAUT, SWALLOWING FIRST SMALL TRIBES...
... THEN, LARGE ARMIES...
... AND GREAT CITIES!
SIRE! THERE ARE STILL SOME ALIVE INSIDE... THEY WANT TO SURRENDER...
NO PRISONERS!
THE HORDE MOVED ACROSS CONTINENTS, LEAVING BEHIND SCORCHED EARTH AND BLEACHED BONES, LEAD BY A RELENTLESS BATTLE-SCARRED MAN NOW RUMORED TO BE DEATH HIMSELF. ZAHRAN'S BLOODLUSTING SWORD NOW HAMMERED AT THE GATES OF THE WESTERN WORLD.
WE'VE MADE GOOD TIME, SIRE... THE FIRST CITY OF THE WEST! B-BUT THE SIZE OF IT!
IT WILL FALL... JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHERS! NO MATTER WHAT THE COST ...I'LL LEAD, THE MEN WILL FOLLOW!

AFTER THIS DAY, DEATH MAY WELL REGRET HIS BARGAIN... THE NAME ZAHRAN WILL STRIKE MORE FEAR THAN THE REAPER HIMSELF!
SIRE! OUT THERE IN THE MISTS... SOMEONE'S COMING!
FLAG OF TRUCE! THEY'VE COME TO PARLAY... WHAT MERCY CAN THEY EXPECT FROM ME?!
ZAHRAN! YOUR REPUTATION RIDES BEFORE YOU... HEAR OUR OFFER!
OUR CHAMPION VALRIC STANDS READY BEFORE THE WALLS... HE CHALLENGES YOU TO PERSONAL COMBAT, OUR CITY THE PRIZE! WHAT WORD SHALL I TAKE BACK TO HIM?
THIS WORD, OLD MAN! AND I'LL BRING IT TO VALRIC PERSONALLY!
ZAHRAN'S BLOOD QUICKENED AS HE CHARGED FORWARD IN THE YEARS OF HIS RISE, FEW HAD DARED CHALLENGE HIM TO INDIVIDUAL BATTLE. FEW HAD THE SKILL OR THE NERVE. HE HOPED THIS CHAMPION WOULD NOT DISAPPOINT HIM...
VALRIC! SHOW YOURSELF, VALRIC!.. IF YOU STILL DARE!
HERE, ZAHRAN... I AWAIT YOU!

NO FURTHER WORDS WERE WASTED. AND ZAHRAN PRESSED FORWARD WITH HIS ATTACK, BRUTALLY AND UNRELENTINGLY, WITH WILD CONFIDENCE AND DISREGARD...



THE SPARKS OF STEEL ON STEEL SPATTERED THE MORNING MIST LIKE FIREFLYS AS THE BATTLE SEE-SAWED BACK AND FORTH, VALRIC GRADUALLY GIVING GROUND BEFORE THE HAMMERING BLADE OF THE CARELESS ZAHRAN...

WITH BONE-SHATTERING FORCE, VALRIC WENT SPRAWLING TO THE GROUND, BLOOD SPURTING FROM HIS YOUTHFUL BODY...

SHARP PAIN SUDDENLY DARTED INTO ZAHRAN'S CHEST, STRIKING DEEP, GNAWING AT HIS HEART...

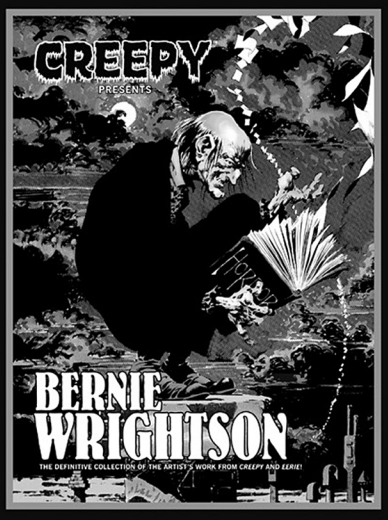
WOUNDS HAD CAUSED ZAHRAN PAIN BEFORE. IT ALWAYS WENT AWAY QUICKLY. HE STAGGERED BACK, STARTING TO LAUGH AT THE YOUNG FOOL'S DYING EFFORT. BLOOD CLOGGED IN HIS THROAT, CHOKING HIM. THE PAIN INCREASED...
I WAS... CARELESS... SHOULD HAVE... KILLED YOU... ONE STROKE... NOW I'LL...
A PAINFUL TREMOR SHUDDERED THROUGH HIS BODY. ZAHRAN'S KNEES WENT LIMP AND THE INVINCIBLE ONE COLLAPSED TO THE GROUND AS VALRIC SLOWLY STAGGERED FROM SIGHT...
I...I'M DYING! CAN'T BE! MY BARGAIN... HOW COULD VALRIC... DEATH CHEATED...
THUNDER SOUNDED NEARBY. THE SKY GREW DARK WITH AN APPROACHING STORM, AND A SHADOW PASSED OVER ZAHRAN, AND THROUGH EYES NARROWED TO SLITS WITH A GRIMACE OF PAIN, HE SAW A GLEAMING WHITE FACE LOOMING CLOSE...
I KEPT MY BARGAIN, ZAHRAN! I DID NOT FORSEE IT'S MAKING YOU A BLASPHEMOUS RIVAL TO ME... YOU DID NOT FORSEE THE SAME BARGAIN MIGHT BE STRUCK WITH OTHERS...
O-OTHERS... OTHERS IMMORTAL LIKE ME?
YES, OTHERS... LIKE YOU, AND LIKE VALRIC!
LOOKS LIKE ZAHRAN'S LITTLE BARGAIN TURNED OUT TO BE THE DEATH OF HIM AFTER ALL! NOW I WONDER HOW VALRIC'S GOING TO MAKE OUT... HE'S PROBABLY DYING TO FIND OUT HIMSELF!
DEATH LEANED CLOSER. HIS HAND TOUCHED ZAHRAN'S CHEST, A TOUCH YEARS DELAYED IN COMING THAT QUICKLY RECAPTURED THE TIME!

CREEPY™ AND EERIE™

PRESENTS

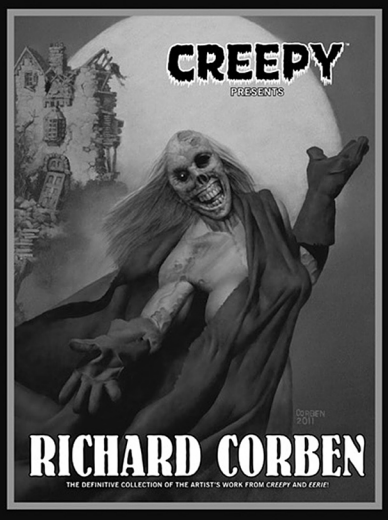
Bringing you the finest compilations of the best-known names in horror comics!

BERNIE WRIGHTSON



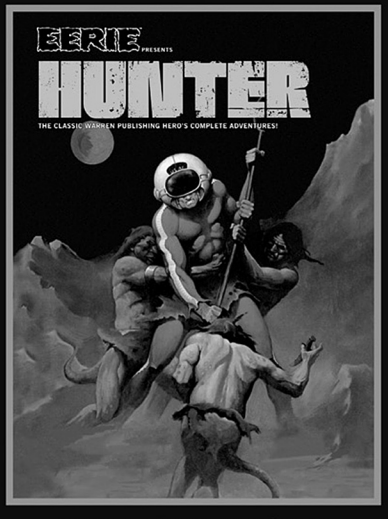
ISBN 978-1-59582-809-5 $19.99

RICHARD CORBEN



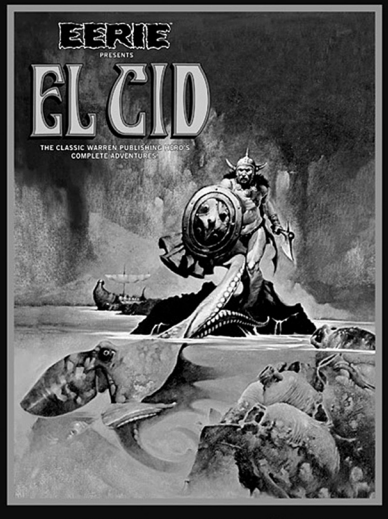
ISBN 978-1-59582-919-1 $29.99

HUNTER



ISBN 978-1-59582-810-1 $19.99

EL CID



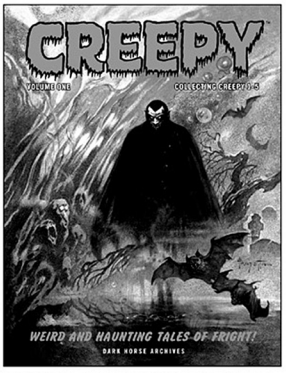
ISBN 978-1-61655-015-8 $15.99

DARK HORSE BOOKS
DarkHorse.com

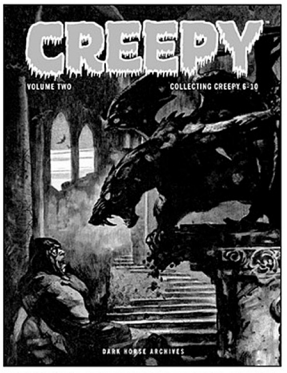
AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL COMICS SHOP OR BOOKSTORE

To find a comics shop in your area, call 1-888-266-4226. For more information or to order direct, visit DarkHorse.com or call 1-800-862-0052 • Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Prices and availability subject to change without notice.

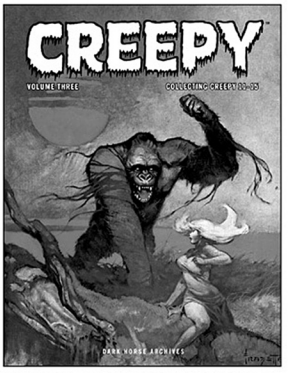
Creepy and Eerie © New Comic Company. (BL 6110)



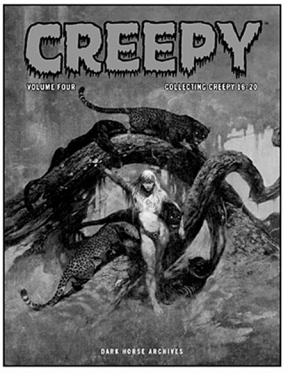
Volume 1 ISBN 978-1-59307-973-4



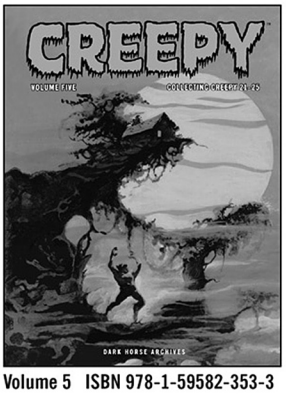
Volume 2 ISBN 978-1-59582-168-3



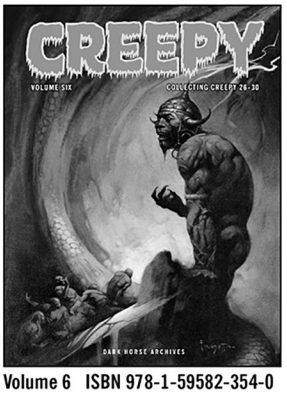
Volume 3 ISBN 978-1-59582-259-8



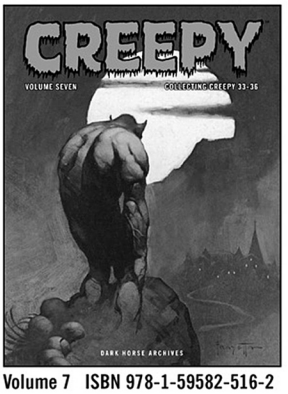
Volume 4 ISBN 978-1-59582-308-3



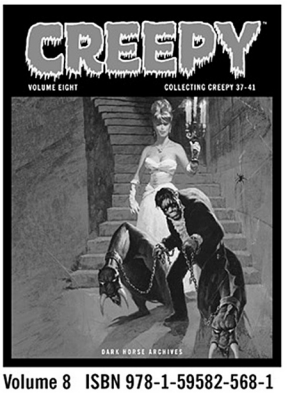
Volume 5 ISBN 978-1-59582-353-3



Volume 6 ISBN 978-1-59582-354-0



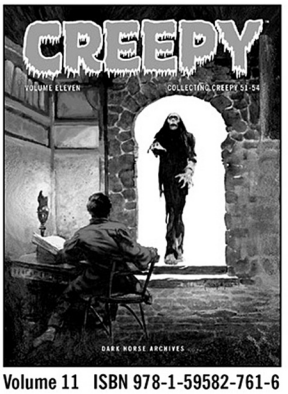
Volume 7 ISBN 978-1-59582-516-2



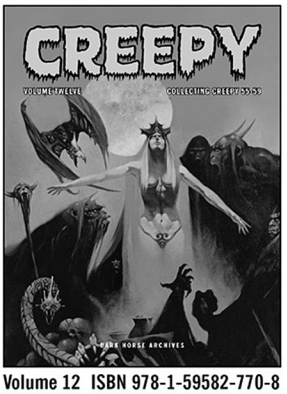
Volume 8 ISBN 978-1-59582-568-1

Volume 9 ISBN 978-1-59582-693-0

Volume 10 ISBN 978-1-59582-719-7



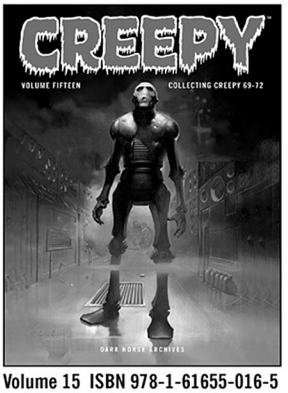
Volume 11 ISBN 978-1-59582-761-6



Volume 12 ISBN 978-1-59582-770-8

Volume 13 ISBN 978-1-59582-771-5

Volume 14 ISBN 978-1-59582-772-2



Volume 15 ISBN 978-1-61655-016-5

Volume 16 ISBN 978-1-61655-104-9

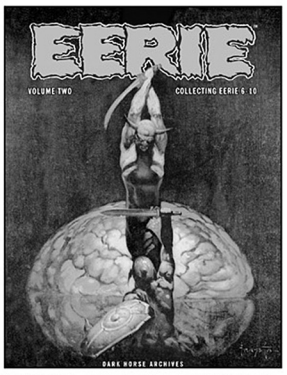
AVAILABLE AT YOUR LOCAL COMICS SHOP OR BOOKSTORE — TO FIND A COMICS SHOP IN YOUR AREA, CALL 1-888-266-4226

For more information or to order direct – On the web: DarkHorse.com E-mail: mailorder@darkhorse.com
Phone: 1-800-862-0052 Mon.–Fri. 9 AM to 5 PM Pacific Time.

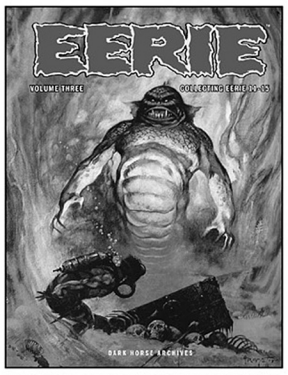
Creepy and Eerie © New Comic Company. Dark Horse Books® and the Dark Horse logo are registered trademarks of Dark Horse Comics, Inc. (BL6083)

DARK HORSE BOOKS
DarkHorse.com

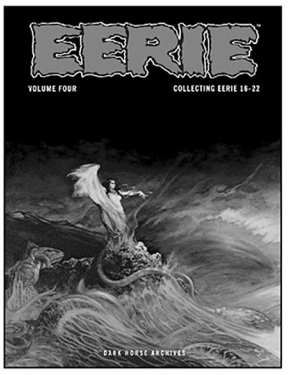
Volume 1 ISBN 978-1-59582-245-1



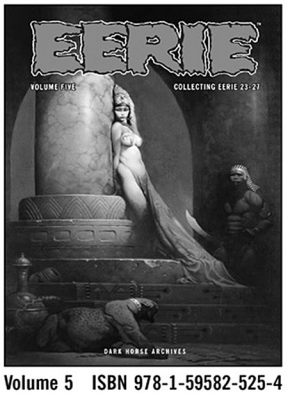
Volume 2 ISBN 978-1-59582-315-1



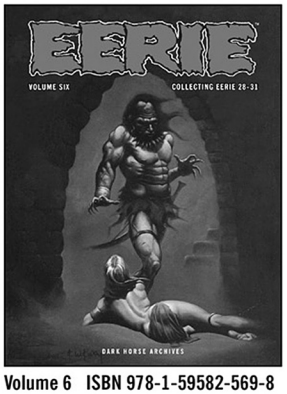
Volume 3 ISBN 978-1-59582-369-4



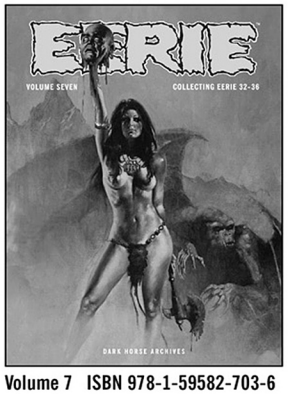
Volume 4 ISBN 978-1-59582-429-5



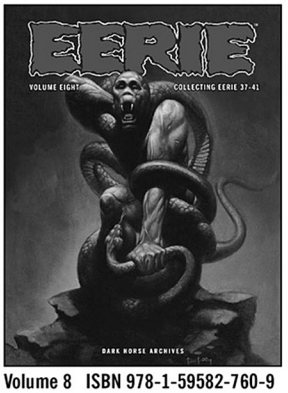
Volume 5 ISBN 978-1-59582-525-4



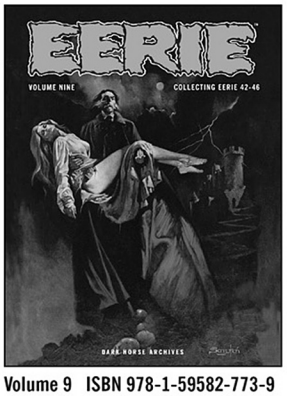
Volume 6 ISBN 978-1-59582-569-8



Volume 7 ISBN 978-1-59582-703-6



Volume 8 ISBN 978-1-59582-760-9

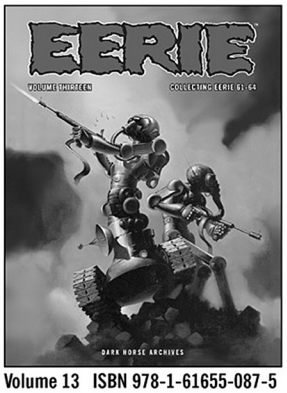


Volume 9 ISBN 978-1-59582-773-9

Volume 10 ISBN 978-1-59582-774-6

Volume 11 ISBN 978-1-59582-775-3

Volume 12 ISBN 978-1-59582-996-2



Volume 13 ISBN 978-1-61655-087-5

CREEPY ARCHIVES AND EERIE ARCHIVES

AAAAHHH! EEEEYAHHHHHH

SCREAMING YOUR HEAD OFF BECAUSE YOU WANT MORE CREEPY?

THEN DRAG YOURSELF TO THE NEAREST COMPUTER AND LOG ON TO THE WORLD WEIRD WEB TO VISIT

CREEPYUNIVERSE.COM

CREEPY™

PRESENTS

STEVE DITKO

STRANGE, EXCITING HORROR TALES FROM THE COCREATOR OF *SPIDER-MAN*!

This deluxe collection is a must for fans of the enigmatic, talented Steve Ditko—who collaborated with the equally talented Archie Goodwin on fifteen of these tension-and-terror-filled stories! *Creepy Presents Steve Ditko* not only finds the artist at his pen-and-ink finest, but also showcases some rarely seen ink-wash work from a storytelling maestro and features a new foreword from comics historian Mark Evanier! Warring wizards, paranoid goons, persistent heroes, and otherworldly domains dominate the sixteen diverse tales in this handsome hardcover! Steve Ditko veered away from the mainstream and into darker territories at the end of the sixties, and his work in *Creepy* and *Eerie* proves that this superhero luminary also excelled at short-form horror!

NEW COMIC COMPANY

DARK HORSE BOOKS

GRAPHIC NOVEL/HORROR DARKHORSE.COM